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TLS

The poisoned fruits of the Risorgimento



Sketch of Victor Emmanuel made from the life by Queen Victoria in October, 1855.

It is a great thing for an English scholar to be referred to with an immediate familiarity by the European intellectual and scholarly press. In Shackleton and Fitzmaurice Cuthbert are distinguished examples; Denis Mack Smith is another. Yet his English friends might be a little surprised to see how often even his Italian admirers qualify his name in Italy with the adjective *antico*. They fall back on this and similar words in order to grapple with a man who has related a whole era of their modern history on a totally unfamiliar basis; they feel instinctively that only some incomprehensible and insular *particular* can explain so alien a viewpoint.

It is at least the merit of recognizing the scale of Mr Mack Smith's achievement, though it underestimates the extent to which some Italians, too, have thought about their history in terms not dissimilar. None the less, he has gone much further than they. To reject an orthodoxy and establish a new interpretation, as Mr Mack Smith has done, is undoubtedly the mark of an outstanding and truly creative historian. He has made himself the master of a field. Whatever he has learnt from others, it is due to him that a traditional view of the *Risorgimento* has now been banished, from teaching, though it seems as if at first this will meet with wider acceptance in his country than in Italy.

Of the classical statements of the established view in English, Mr Mack Smith is generously appreciative. Early in his career he enjoyed the society and advice of T. F. Slater, and he has pointed out in his recent selection of documents that the books of Bolland King, Haygarth and Whyte are still extremely useful. Their case rested on sound scholarship. None the less, it demanded revision, and this was not merely because all orthodoxies insist. It was also because, as Mr Mack Smith has shown in many specific cases, the sources available to the older generation were often inadequate, however carefully used. But there was also another, more compelling motive for reassessment: between the establishment of the traditional view of the *Risorgimento* and ourselves stretches the experience of Fascism. It demands, and suggests, a new perspective on its antecedents. Here, of course, many Italians agreed with and anticipated Mr Mack Smith.

The old view of the *Risorgimento* was after all through with the nineteenth-century assumption that the growth of nation states was both essentially liberal and intellectually part of a general historical trend. It could not and ought not to be revised. This view was for a long time reinforced only by Catholicism, which was violently hostile towards a view linked with events elsewhere - the *Kulturkampf*, the suppression of the republic in France, the diplomatic perfidy of Protestant Prussia. But this sort of confirmation was little impact. This was not merely because it was rejected by the Italian academic establishment; it was also too extreme and unacceptable in most of its expressions, and in fact conceded much of the Catholic liberal case. It assumed, with the individualistic connexion between liberalism and the *Risorgimento* and that this was part of the great historical trend which set the terms for comprehending it. The Catholics parted company with liberalism only in thinking that the current ought to be resisted. The way in which this chosen task was undertaken was so hasty that it left liberal orthodoxy unscathed on this flank right down to our own day. By and large, the classical liberal interpretation held its ground on this side of the Alps until 1954 when Mr Mack Smith published *Cavour and Garibaldi, 1860*.

Thus began a revolution. It was to unfold on two fronts. The narrower was a series of close scholarly scrutiny of individual episodes whose general sense had long been taken for granted. There was, it is true, an immense encumbrance of writing about many of them, but it was

essentially antiquarian rather than critical. The big book on 1861 remains the most substantial of Mr Mack Smith's revisions of this kind; several shorter pieces (which reappear in *Victor Emmanuel, Cavour and the Risorgimento*) extend this scrutiny to such topics as Cavour's relations with parliament, his behaviour at the Congress of Paris, and the Tuscan revolution of 1859. The other front was that of general interpretation. It was announced in a little essay on the *Risorgimento*

DENIS MACK SMITH: *Victor Emmanuel, Cavour, and the Risorgimento*, 381pp. Oxford University Press. £7. DENIS MACK SMITH (Editor): *The Making of Italy 1796-1866* 428pp. Macmillan, £4.50.

antecedents of some strains of Fascism in the periodical *Occidente*, where it was put more trenchantly, perhaps, than in subsequent and more developed statements. The chief of these was Mr Mack Smith's *Italy: A Modern History* (1959), but the general lines of a new framework of interpretation have been extended back into the pre-unification period and now present a continuing argument.

Broadly speaking, Mr Mack Smith asserts that the *Risorgimento* did not in some curious way go wrong after 1871, nor did its traditions and principles undergo defeat by Fascism, but rather that, at the extreme, Fascism itself ought to be understood as an expression of the *Risorgimento*, that the forces and practices it represented went back through the history of liberal Italy

to the way in which their Italy was made and the motives for its making. The fathers had eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge.

This was strong stuff. Many Italians have violently resisted it, though its basis can be found in the writings of others who saw in Fascism an intensification of some features of pre-1914 Italy. It is the nature of the historian's art that complete originality is almost impossible. Even a Nannini is preceded by a Winstanley, and Mr Mack Smith owes something to the writings of Salvemini and Giobetti and, at least so far as his views on parliamentary history are concerned, to Gramsci. Yet many Italians have seen his work as only an intrusion, and one which is dangerous. They have been able to discern little but iconoclasm in what Mr Mack Smith says; they deplore further inspection of clay feet on statues of *Risorgimento* leaders, and feel that the whole thing is in any case beside the point at best the incomprehending mauling of English political puritanism, at worst the systematic devaluation of a great truth by a muck-raker.

It is curious that much of this criticism is itself irrelevant. Over much of the field, Mr Mack Smith's interpretation departs only in emphasis from the traditional. Nor is the form of his work startling. His method is unimpeachably within conventional modes: in dealing with politics, diplomacy and the related social history he scans the high seas of sociological theory, grandiose generalizations about the class-struggle and all that diminishes the particular and personal in the *Risorgimento*. It maddened, and maddened a lot, that Cavour crossed Victor Emmanuel over the king's mistress, Rosina, and it could hardly be otherwise in a country where a political class in any national sense did not exist except as an aggregation of local elites. Marxist historians seem to have made little impact on the historical thinking of Mr Mack Smith, though he has shown his appreciation of social forces in the *Risorgimento* in a brilliant study of the peasant revolt of 1861 in Sicily included in *Victor Emmanuel, Cavour, and the Risorgimento*. This reveals the underside of even the finest moment of the epic, the story of the Thousand; it also exposes Garibaldi in the role of policeman of property. It is a particularly striking example of the truth that unification benefited the few, often at the expense of the many.

The reminder that the *Risorgimento* was almost always a matter of minorities is, of course, deeply destructive of the myth that a great national purpose was attained by a national movement, embracing all classes and localities. Mazzini, a loser, known better, it was just the failure of unification to come about in this way that so soured him, though he attributed more to individual agency in bringing this about than was justified. That the *Risorgimento* was not a popular movement is one of the elements in Mr Mack Smith's restatement which has been uncovered first by Mazzini, then by others, and to combine it with others

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in a new synthesis. Other elements towards a new synthesis are those now collected in *Victor Emmanuel, Cavour and the Risorgimento*. Some have never before been printed, some of them have only appeared in out-of-the-way places and in Italian; they make a valuable book, whose only demerit is its appalling price.

The first essay in the book summarizes the Mack Smith version of the *Risorgimento* and does so brilliantly in thirty-seven pages; this is a masterpiece of compressed scholarship. For years to come, examiners will curse the name of Mack Smith for it is safe to predict that this essay will become the classic crib for schoolboy and undergraduate who want an authoritative—and, above all, brief—statement of the Truth. Such misuse is the most sincere tribute a historian can receive, and it will be justified.

It first maps out the setting of the *Risorgimento*: the lack of internal factors pointing to the eventual unification of Italy is emphasized. The presence of social and economic stress which helped to achieve change but which was not removed by it is noted. The alternative programmes in the field and their unrealism are summarized. Austria's role is related so that its ambivalence comes out. When all this has been done, there emerges from the narrative of the events a picture of confusion, incoherence, *justo facto* rationalizing and mythologizing which culminates in the uneasy and unhappy new kingdom. Yet the conclusion is inescapable, and Mr Mack Smith states it: "Although many people were . . . unhappy about the outcome, the forging of national unity had been a great achievement." What, then, have the patriots to complain about?

Almost at once, Mr Mack Smith goes on to quote the moving passage in which the dying Mazzini mourned Italy—a corpse, he said, without a living soul inside it, it had been put together piece by piece, like a mosaic, by foreigners fighting Italians' battles for their own interests. He, at least, would not have been surprised by much of the Mack Smith version, though he would not have judged the outcome so favourably, though there is much more to it, of course. Mr Mack Smith's case rests much of Mazzini's, here is one source of offence to some Italians. In his studies of Cavour and Victor Eman-

uel he has carried further the process he began in his book on the 1860 crisis of uncovering the actual process of unification, and the contrast with the organic, spontaneous process dreamt of by Mazzini is vivid. It is not pleasant for many Italians to be reminded (to quote once more) that the *Risorgimento* depended essentially on "force, on wars and civil wars," and the engineering of them, that preparation for them was inept (and that here Cavour should not go blameless), that popular identification with the process was so slight that the Italian government killed more Italians in the 1860s than the enemy in all the wars of the *Risorgimento*, that the only important Italian units at Magenta were on the Austrian side, that fear of social revolution was continuously affecting events, that (according to Azeglio, who never hesitated to put an unpalatable truth) there were in the newly annexed kingdom of the Two Sicilies not a hundred believers in Italian unity out of 7 million inhabitants.

Azeglio's remark is doubly interesting because it raises the question of the origins of the traditional view held. If contemporaries could be so clear-sighted, why did a mythology grow up whose exposure still causes pain a hundred years later? An immediately cynical and by no means improper answer is that this is the way things often happen; the immediate successors of those familiar with an historical episode are the ones who have the greatest difficulty in remembering what it really was like. But this reply does not go far enough. There has also been, as Mr Mack Smith has shown, deliberate distortion of the record, and it goes back a long way. The motives were often in the first place discriminating and plausible, but one suspects coarser ones have long operated. "Beautiful legends," thought Giolitti, ought not be discredited; he had more than aesthetic considerations in mind.

The unexamined role of the king

The result of this has been that historians long had only a selection of evidence with which to work. In spite of the flood of published papers, much less than the whole story was available. Selections were made in order to reflect credit on some figures. Since this was in some instances very much to the dis-



Cavour in 1835, by his English friend William Brockedon.

advantage of the reputation of others, a Cambridge historian like Mr Mack Smith might well feel that the Actonian tradition alone demands the uncovering of the truth in such matters. A revelation of how big are the concealed areas still awaiting illumination is provided by the discussion of Victor Emmanuel, which is the most novel part of his new collection. Six studies deal directly with the king and matters affecting him, but he pops up in many of the others. This is not because he was in fact the heroic figure of legend; far from it, he is notably diminished. He was important because the monarchy was important; it is a big part of the story of the *Risorgimento*, a big factor in its shaping.

Curiously enough, little is known of *il re piemontese*, though the mythologists and adulators have not neglected him. The grandiose pretension of the Rome monument states the role he is supposed to fill, yet Victor Emmanuel has not been systematically studied by historians. He is the unexamined piece on the chess-board. His predecessor and father, Charles Albert, was also the object of myth-making enough, but in his case it has not prevented serious biographical study. No corresponding serious work exists on Victor Emmanuel.

One of Mr Mack Smith's discoveries was the extent to which this

reflected the wishes of his family, and its practice down to this day. The private archives of the House of Savoy remain inaccessible; such materials from them as have been published by permission are evidently selected in order to present the king in the best possible light. There is even a sinister hint of intimidation in the successful maintenance of this front. This is not creditable, but it must at once be said that the falsification of the record by suppression and exaggeration was in fact begun by the statesmen of the first generation of united Italy themselves, the very people in the best position to know the truth. No one did more to create a myth than Azeglio. The counter-appeal of Garibaldi and Pius IX among the masses needed to be offset.

Given the powers of the king under the Piedmontese *Statuto*, it is also to be understandable that an edited version of the truth should be thought necessary. These powers were considerable (and remained so as later episodes in the monarchy's history revealed). Unrestricted publication would therefore be bound to expose the gap between Victor Emmanuel's use of them and that which might have been made of them by a more conscientious king. Mr Mack Smith's account of him in the early 1830s, during his apprenticeship as a monarch, and on the

eve of the Crimean War reveals also as from the outset an unattractive monarch. Tactics and intrigue gave an all-too-ready expression to political views whose focus was neither the interest of the nation even of the monarchy, but a personal preoccupation with his own and prejudices. He was taken in by irreparable disaster only by incoherence of his own aims and stiffness of ministers who exploited his blunders for their benefit. His response was petulant; he had a child's irritation and hindrance, including any who came from the Church he so hated. The best that Mr Mack Smith can say of him was that he was a good-natured, if not a good-natured. Some contemporaries agreed.

Whether he was a constitutional king is harder to say, but on the whole it seems that Victor Emmanuel did not move grievously outside *Statuto* if, indeed, he broadened it. Given his generous definition of the king's power, he probably did not need to, though he violated the spirit of the constitution. He did not accept the notion that ministers were responsible to parliament. He was, of course, in no way a liberal, but it is not easy to see of many nineteenth-century monarchs who were. But he did not believe in illegality, and Cavour did. As for patriotism, he did not in the 1830s yet believe in Italian unity. He was by then known to be more of a hindrance than a help to his ministers, though they might need his formal authority and influence.

In need of the monarchy

In the later stages of his life other themes add to the charge against him. He dabbled only with diplomacy behind the ministers' backs. Above all, it was his fancy that he was a statesman. This had more serious consequences than the simple inflation of his vanity; it fatally encumbered the military side of the *Risorgimento*, for which he claimed a special responsibility. Cavour, a special responsibility, result was *Livorno* and *Castello*. He came the embarrassment of the true extent of the disasters of Italian armed forces, because he would have compromised the monarchy, the one institution which



The political clash of April 18, 1861, with Ruffini, left, in the Chamber. The debate is over: 'Are we friends now?' Cavour: 'Friends yes, but not for life.'

well he thought to have been helpful and even sometimes necessary in dealing with someone like Victor Emmanuel. It is less easy to see why such judgments as these should have caused so much distress. The final verdict of Mr Mack Smith on Cavour is favourable: a "high common factor of liberalism and statesmanship" are his words. This judgment overlooks not only consideration of such weaknesses as have been mentioned (if they be thought weaknesses) but also far graver charges. For most part the most telling ones are *à la longue* charges; they concern Cavour's long-term legacies through example and doctrine. Here again it has to be remembered that Mr Mack Smith entered upon his researches in the aftermath of a great Italian tragedy; for him, the shadow of Fascism always lies over the *Risorgimento*.

Political tradition founded on a sham

In such perspectives it tells against Cavour that he is often subordinated principle to parliamentary tactics. *Unitarismo* decades later is from Mr Mack Smith's standpoint little more than a rationalization of techniques which he had used for the pursuit of power. They left Italy without the experience of true political debate. Yet other constitutional states have survived such techniques; recent examples rush to mind. If Cavour was a bad example, where are the alternative models of the political public to be found, and why are they not forthcoming? Cavour does not have to display the sensitivity of political consequence of a *Chakone* to command our sympathy in the very different political conditions of the Piedmontese monarchy. We remember, too, that not everyone admired the Grand Old Man's conscience all that much. Mr Mack Smith concedes that in the Crimean emergency (essentially a domestic one), Cavour "made the best of a bad job"; it cannot plausibly be argued that a royal war and the damage it must have done, successful or unsuccessful, would have served Piedmont better. If there is unhealthy dependence on a single man, rest at least some of the blame rests on the context of political possibilities and not on him.

The casualness with which he regarded a little constitutional irregularity is perhaps a more serious charge; the price of liberty, of which he proclaimed himself the son, is indeed eternal vigilance in such matters, and he admitted his culpability. But if Victor Emmanuel found advantages in the elasticity of the *Statuto*, it is hard to deny that his minister should seek to exploit parliamentary possibilities.

None the less, this is a charge that sticks. It cannot be good for a nation's political tradition to be founded on a sham and that is what, at moments, constitutional and united Italy did look like, for all Cavour's lip service to parliament. A

more limited charge, but also considerable, is that he began the alienation of the church from the state by his policies in Piedmont. This is a good point, too often obscured by Catholic polemic. A different point which is often confused with it is that neither he nor any other Piedmontese statesman was responsible for the alienation of the church from a different entity, the new nation. More was involved in this than angry responses to lay lawyers' handling of clerical immunities; the ideological conflict of church and nationality, the principle embodied in Italy's cause, was the work of Rome.

There is a great deal owed to a historian who can breathe life into dead bones and even, more to one who can assemble them in unfamiliar ways which yet convey a true likeness. Mr Mack Smith has earned more than thanks for this, too, for this particular piece of demythologizing has a quite unusual social value in the present intellectual climate of Italy. He has also demonstrated the virtues of old-fashioned history, for his weapons are, in the end, the traditional ones of erudition, thoroughness and scrupulousness in uncovering and assessing evidence. The tone of his exposition often conceals its dramatic content; the story is patiently unravelled in the methodical, high Cambridge way. It is reassuring to see how much can be uncovered even in so cultivated a field as that of *Risorgimento* history. Foreign archives are an important resource, but great gaps remain (and there are deplorable instances of refusals to help Mr Mack Smith fill them) in the evidence. It is especially noteworthy, therefore, that he has gained much more than any previous scholar by combing the printed materials; in out-of-the-way, long-forgotten books he has confirmed the truth too often lost to sight that much more is already recorded than is usually thought. He has used some of these materials in his well-chosen selection of documents (whose scope in fact goes beyond the dates of the title and takes in the occupation of Rome).

No doubt some Italian readers will overlook Mr Mack Smith's general conclusion, but it is in the end commendatory: a great man, he says, Cavour was a great man, the *Risorgimento* was a great achievement. Nor is this all. To uncover the true context of the circumstances within which politicians had to work can enhance or at least redeem somewhat the reputations of other figures, even of such conservatives as Ferdinand of Naples. More centrally, when such an individual emulates in some way the magnificence of the burdens of the *Risorgimento* leaders springs into relief. Such considerations will not satisfy those who want a simpler, more violent judgment, but if they object they should recognize that they reject more than one man's work, for Mr Mack Smith is more than an individual with a bee in his bonnet.

He is an outstanding example of a whole historical mentality, the fostering of which for good or ill has been one of the outstanding English cultural creations of this century. Its characteristic stance is critical; it uses traditional and highly-litigious techniques to probe and expose. It is formidably solvent of the canons of established judgments. At its worst it is a big scenario. At its best it is (as Mr Mack Smith never is) quarulous and nagging. At its best it has great dignity, for it does not exempt itself from its own scrutiny. It does not pretend to the moral superiority which would seek to ignore the web of historical circumstances in which all men are caught. Mr Mack Smith's work unequivocally expresses this mentality at its best. He shows its inspiring power, for his *Risorgimento* is in the end not, after all, without its heroes. Even the transcendence of circumstance in a dispirited, fateful way often requires a courage and vision for which heroism is not too strong a word.

THAMES AND HUDSON

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Detail of woodcut from Geller van Kalkbrenner's 'Scenes from German History' (1514). 'Death in the Middle Ages'.

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in a new synthesis. Other elements towards it grew in definition and solidarity from such studies as those now collected in *Victor Emmanuel, Cavour and the Risorgimento*. Some have never before been printed, some of them have only appeared in out-of-the-way places and in Italian; they make a valuable book, whose only demerit is its appalling price.

The first essay in the book summarizes the Mack Smith version of the *Risorgimento* and does so brilliantly in thirty-seven pages; this is a masterpiece of compressed scholarship. For years to come, examiners will curse the name of Mack Smith for it is safe to predict that this essay will become the classic crib for schoolboy and undergraduate who want an authoritative—and, above all, brief—statement of the Truth. Such rescue is the most sincere tribute an historian can receive, and it will be justified.

It first maps out the setting of the *Risorgimento*: the lack of internal factors pointing to the eventual unification of Italy is emphasized. The presence of social and economic stress which helped to achieve change but which was not removed by it is noted. The alternative programmes in the field and their unreasoning no summarized. Austria's role is stated so that its ambivalence comes out. When all this has been done, there emerges from the narrative of the events a picture of confusion, incoherence, post facto rationalizing and mythologizing which culminates in the uneasy and unhappy new kingdom. Yet the conclusion is unambiguous, and Mr Mack Smith states it: "Although many people were unhappy about the outcome, the forging of national unity was a great achievement." What, then, have the patriots to complain about?

Almost at once, Mr Mack Smith goes on to quote the moving passage in which the dying Mazzini mourned Italy—a corpse, he said, without a living soul inside it, it had been put together piece by piece, like a mosaic, by foreigners fighting Italian battles for their own interests. He, at least, would not have been surprised by much of the Mack Smith version, though he would not have judged the outcome so favourably, though there is much more to it: of course, Mr Mack Smith's case restates much of Mazzini's; here is one source of offence to some Italians. In his studies of Cavour and Victor Emmanuel

he has carried further the process he began in his book on the 1860 crisis of uncovering the actual process of unification, and the contrast with the organic, spontaneous process dreamt of by Mazzini is vivid. It is not pleasant for many Italians to be reminded (to quote once more) that the *Risorgimento* depended essentially on "force, on wars and civil wars" and the engineering of them, that preparation for them was inept (and that here Cavour should not go blameless), that popular identification with the process was so slight that the Italian government killed more Italians in the 1860s than the enemy in all the wars of the *Risorgimento*, that the only important Italian units at Magenta were on the Austrian side, that fear of social revolution was continuously affecting events, that (according to Azeglio, who never hesitated to put an unpalatable truth) there were in the newly annexed kingdom of the Two Sicilies not a hundred believers in Italian unity out of 7 million inhabitants.

Azeglio's remark is doubly interesting because it raises the question of the origins of the traditional view held. If contemporaries could be so clear-sighted, why did a mythology grow up whose exposure still causes pain a hundred years later? An immediately cynical and by no means improper answer is that this is the way things often happen: the immediate successors of those familiar with an historical episode are the ones who have the greatest difficulty in remembering what it really was like. But this reply does not go far enough. There has also been, as Mr Mack Smith has shown, deliberate distortion of the record, and it goes back a long way. The motives were often in the first place discriminatory and plausible, but one suspects coarser ones have long operated. "Beautiful legends", thought Giolitti, ought not to be discarded; he had more than aesthetic considerations in mind.

The unexamined role of the king

The result of this has been that historians long had only a selection of evidence with which to work. In spite of the flood of published papers, much less than the whole story was available. Selections were made in order to reflect credit on some figures. Since this was in some instances very much to the dis-



Cavour in 1835, by his English friend William Brockedon.

advantage of the reputation of others, a Cambridge historian like Mr Mack Smith might well feel that the Actonian tradition alone demands the uncovering of the truth in such matters. A revelation of how big are the concealed areas still awaiting illumination is provided by the discussion of Victor Emmanuel which is the most novel part of his new collection. Six studies deal directly with the king and matters affecting him, but he pops up in many of the others. This is not because he was in fact the heroic figure of legend; far from it, he is notably diminished. He was important because the monarchy was important: it is a big part of the story of the *Risorgimento*, a big factor in its shaping.

Curiously enough, little is known of *il re galantuomo*, though the mythologists and adulators have not neglected him. The grandiose pretension of the Rome monument states the role he is supposed to fill, yet Victor Emmanuel has not been systematically studied by historians. He is the unexamined piece on the chess-board. His predecessor and father, Charles Albert, was also the object of myth-making enough, but in his case it has not prevented serious biographical study. No corresponding serious work exists on Victor Emmanuel.

One of Mr Mack Smith's discoveries was the extent to which this

reflected the wishes of his family, and its practice down to this day. The private archives of the House of Savoy remain inaccessible; such materials from them as have been published by permission are evidently selected in order to present the king in the best possible light. There is even a sinister hint of intimidation in the successful maintenance of this front. This is not creditable, but it must at once be said that the falsification of the record by suppression and exaggeration was in fact begun by the statesmen of the first generation of united Italy themselves, the very people in the best position to know the truth. No one did more to create a myth than Azeglio. The counter-appeal of Garibaldi and Pius IX among the masses needed to be offset.

Given the powers of the king under the Piedmontese Statute, it is also in part understandable that an edited version of the truth should be thought necessary. These powers were considerable (and remained so, as later episodes in the monarchy's history revealed). Unrestricted publication would therefore have bound to expose the gap between Victor Emmanuel's use of them and that which might have been made of them by a more conscientious king. Mr Mack Smith's account of him in the early 1850s, during his apprenticeship as a monarch, and on the

eve of the Crimean War reveals also as from the outset an ungrateful monarch. Tactics and strategy gave an all-too-ready expression neither the interest of the nation, even of the monarchy, but a self-preoccupation with his own comfort and prejudices. He was never from irreparable disaster only by the assistance of ministers who exploited his blunders for his benefit. His response was to hinderance, including any came from the Church he believed in. The best that Mr Mack Smith can say of him was that he was affable and, if not a good-natured. Some contemporaries agreed.

Whether he was a constitutional king is harder to say, but as a whole it seems that Victor Emmanuel did not move seriously outside *Statuto* if, indeed, he breached it at all. Given its generous definition of the king's power, he probably did not need to, though he violated the spirit of the constitution. He did not accept the notion that ministers were responsible to parliament. He was, of course, in no sense a liberal, but it is not easy to see of many nineteenth-century monarchs who were. But he did not know illegality, and Cavour did. As for patriotism, he did not in the 1850s yet believe in Italian unity, nor the respectable story of the liberation of Rome, in which his own vanity, vindictiveness and many defects of intelligence and character reached their culminating point. But, given Mr Mack Smith's fundamental analysis of the *Risorgimento*, it may be wondered what it would have made all that if Cavour had been ruled by a more man. It was in the future that Victor Emmanuel's influence was to be seen when it appeared how important had been the presumptions of monarchy tolerated in the formative years of the new state.

In need of the monarchy

In the later stages of his argument, Mr Mack Smith adds to the case against him. He dabbled only with diplomacy behind ministers' backs. Above all, it was his fancy that he was a monarch. This had more serious consequences than the simple inflation of his vanity; it fatally encumbered the whole military side of the *Risorgimento*; the *Risorgimento* was tragically described as a great part of the work of three men: Garibaldi, Cavour, the statesman; and Victor Emmanuel, the king. The result was a special responsibility. It came to a head in the case of the Italian army, the true source and the true extent of the disaster of Italian armed forces, because it would have compromised the monarchy, the one institution



The palmarian clash of April 18, 1861, with Ranuzzi, left, in the foreground. The debate is over: Are we friends now? Friends yes, but not for life.

well be thought to have been helpful and even sometimes necessary in dealing with someone like Victor Emmanuel.

It is less easy to see why such judgments as these should have caused so much distress. The final verdict of Mr Mack Smith on Cavour is favourable: a "high common factor of liberalism and statesmanship" are his words. This judgment overrules not only consideration of such weaknesses as have been mentioned but also far graver charges. For most part the most telling ones are a *la longue durée*; they concern Cavour's long-term legacy through example and doctrine. Here again it has to be remembered that Mr Mack Smith entered upon his researches in the aftermath of a great Italian tragedy; far from the shadow of Fascism always lies over the *Risorgimento*.

Political tradition founded on a slant

In such perspectives it tells against Cavour that he so often subordinated principle to parliamentary tactics. *Trifolium* decades later is from Mr Mack Smith's standpoint little more than a rationalization of techniques which he had used for the pursuit of power. They left little without the experience of true political debate. Yet other constitutional states have survived such techniques; recent examples come to mind. If Cavour was a bad example, where are the alternative models of the political public to be found, and why are they not forthcoming? Cavour does not have to display the sensitivity of political conscience of a Gladstone to command our sympathy in the very different political conditions of the Piedmontese monarchy (we remember, too, that not everyone admired the Grand Old Man's conscience all that much). Mr Mack Smith concedes that in the Crimean emergency (essentially a domestic one), Cavour "made the best of a bad job"; it cannot plausibly be argued that a royal war and the damage it must have done, successful or unsuccessful, would have served Piedmont better. If a single man, then at least some of the blame rests on the context of political possibilities and not on him.

The casualness with which he regarded a little constitutional irregularity is perhaps a more serious charge: the price of liberty, which he proclaimed himself a non, is indeed eternal vigilance in such matters, and he admitted his culpability. But if Victor Emmanuel found advantages in the elasticity of the *Statuto*, it is hard to deny that his minister should seek to exploit parliamentary possibilities.

None the less, this is a charge that sticks. It cannot be good for a nation's political tradition to be founded on a slant and that is what, at moments, constitutional and united Italy did look like, for all Cavour's lip-service to parliament. A

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Detail of wooden figure from Geller von Kibitzberg's 'Serenus' (Germans 1514). 'Death in the Middle Ages'.

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Stalin's blight


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Probably the most valuable feature of his contribution to the "Penguin African Library" is the insight Thomas Kuzni provides into the confused events of the first few months of independence, and into the personality and actions of Lumumba. For Lumumba he felt both admiration and friendship, and he states firmly at the beginning of the book his conviction that Lumumba showed

Tumumba could be described, without too much unfairness, as a preposterous windbag, pursuing his policies in such a way that his government, and indeed his country, could not avoid disaster. To leave the judgment here, however, would be grossly inaccurate. Mr. Kanza, who deals with savable qualities of detachment (perhaps because he is essentially a civil servant rather than a politician), sets the record straight. His study is a masterly combination of commitments and objectivity.

Vietnam year-book

Ronald Glosser is a pediatrician who did military service at a United States base hospital in Japan in 1968-69. He was not in Vietnam, but, apart from treating dependents' children, had opportunities to talk to combat casualties evacuated from the war zone. He has selected, and worked up into novelistic style, the seventeen episodes in *255 Days* from the latest the coauthors told him. The title refers to the length of the tour his informants did in Vietnam.

Three or four years ago, Peter Kemp ghosted the adventures in Vietnam of his GI brother, but he made that identity, and the status of

Many of the items in this volume are occasional lectures and interviews, and less substantial than the long essays which have appeared in the two previous volumes published since Isaac Deutscher's death in 1967. But Tamara Deutscher has done one well to put this collection together, for it provides an excellent introduction to important aspects of Marxism in our time, by one of the most gifted Marxist writers of our time.

Grassed A
GARY:
Paris: Gallinard. 31fr.

I've got you a job at Hobson's Coal Yard humping sacks, and it begins at one o'clock and I've instructed Hobson to hammer you till you teeth rattle if you don't get your back down to it. And told him I would personally swear in court that it was a lorry backing into you did it.

No cliché is left to do its peaceful work, an aspect of state primary education is sacred to the author. Readers who have teachers to buy Christmas presents for would do well to buy up a copy or two of the *Report for stock*. While we laugh at it, however, we might keep in mind some of the recently publicized research findings on education and social class. The author means us

dramatic lumber, brought in to
 facilitate structuring and to make for
 non-lit moral intelligibility. In
 fact, the brilliant portrait of Stone
 does not need all the virtuous italics.
 Stone's mumbo-jumbo world of con-
 ceit and anxiety is brilliantly
 realized; hardly more than a flimsy
 ego, his life consists of variety-
 ratings, liver spots, Harley Street
 specialists, lengthening teeth, and
 hopeless vulnerability.

the ruffian who courts and won Nero's confidence and trust, and chief persecutor of those suspected of conspiracy: "A writer has no responsibilities, for responsibilities are the burden of power. He is, at best, an entertainer. . . . At less than best, he is an oaf who lets 'fair's to both' ends"; on the other, Seneca, whose opinions appear to come close to those of Tigellinus but whose statement "Writers

On the whole, though, *London* seems to have got over its revolts against style—as evidenced in those studiously incomplete spy stories—and to have come down to what he does best: writing, lucidly and readably, the kind of fiction that makes this immigration sees.

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528pp. University of California Press. £9.50.

The California Dryden rolls majestically on. In this, the first volume of the Prose (as distinct from prefaces and other pieces attached to specific plays and poems) we are given *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, the *Historiographical Royal piece* *His Majesties Duty*, and *Observations* on the *History of the English Language*. Dryden's three contributions to the 1683 translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, the *Historiographical Royal piece* *His Majesties Duty*, and *Observations* on the *History of the English Language*. Dryden's three contributions to the 1683 translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, the *Historiographical Royal piece* *His Majesties Duty*, and *Observations* on the *History of the English Language*. Dryden's three contributions to the 1683 translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, the *Historiographical Royal piece* *His Majesties Duty*, and *Observations* on the *History of the English Language*.

The editor-in-chief of this volume is that distinguished elder scholar, Samuel Monk, with A. E. Wallace Maurer as his co-editor; but the list of additional credits is unusually long, reflecting the varied nature of the material, on which expert advice was required and willingly given.

From backwoods to Buddhism

The Rexroth Reader

Edited by Eric Mottram

437pp. Cape. £5.50.

Kenneth Rexroth is usually associated with the Beat movement that began in San Francisco in the second half of the 1950s. It was he who introduced the poetry reading in the Six Gallery, San Francisco, at which Allen Ginsberg first read his poem "Howl", published later by Ferlinghetti in October, 1956. Rexroth was established as "godfather of the Beats", a title that came to be used, largely by hostile academic critics, as a derogatory label. Though the identification is, for a number of reasons, valid, it is at the same time a vast oversimplification of Rexroth's significance.

There were certainly similarities between Rexroth's life-style and that of the Beat generation. There was also a sense in which he contributed stylistically to the poetry of that movement through his work of the 1940s and 1950s—*The Dragon and the Unicorn*, *The Signature of All Things*, *In Defense of the Earth*. But in fact he served less as a poetic example for poets such as Ginsberg than as an introduction to San Francisco. Ginsberg, the foremost of the Beat poets, grew up in Paterson and at that time owed more to William Carlos Williams than to Rexroth; it was Williams who instilled the desire to write in the rhythms of American speech.

Rexroth was born in 1905 in Indiana. In a particularly good introduction to *The Rexroth Reader* Eric Mottram draws an appreciative picture of the man and the artist. His statements are supported by the inclusion of large extracts from Rexroth's autobiographical novel, published in 1966. Mr Mottram points out how Rexroth's aim has always been to be both contemporary and scholarly. It is the width of his knowledge and experience and his combination of these two elements into a political and philosophical system (radicalism, transcendentalism and Zen) that Rexroth once divided the subject-matter of his poetry into sex, revolution and mysticism which provides the drive for his creative work.

His writing covers the range of literary form—prose, poetry, translation, drama—but it is for his poetry that he is best known, and rightly so.

There is here a long history of stylistic experiment in which his association with the Beat movement plays only a small part. Though in interviews he has denied the influence, his early poetry (*The Art of Wandering* 1920-30) shows an awareness of the European Surrealist and Dadaist movements. His latest poetry (*The Heart's Garden*, *The Garden's Heart* 1967) is, in contrast, centrally mystical, strongly Buddhist. His poetry of the 1940s and 1950s shows a concern with the relationship between personal experience, mystical awareness and radical politics. He can be seen experimenting with conversational tone and the breath-controlled line in a manner not unlike the later Beat poets.

Keep it flat, keep it abstract

JULIO CORTAZAR

Pamcos y meopas

135pp. Barcelona: Oenos. 55ptas.

Jolio Cortázar often plays with his readers. In *Rayuela* it was over the possibility of a dual reading, with *Los premios* to avoid an allegorical reading about Argentinian society. This explanatory and justificatory need is evident in his own note to an earlier selection of his poems: Simplified, this reads: I wrote these poems for fun, for myself, but some friends twisted my arm so here they are. Despite the playful pose there are interesting questions to ask: why does Cortázar view his poems with such apparent humility? Has it to do with his dislike for personal revelation? Further, if poetry is an outlet how does it differ from his prose?

Like many Latin American novelists, Cortázar started writing as a poet, publishing a book of poems, *Presencia*, pseudonymously in 1938.

Since then, he has published occasional verse, maintained an interest in poetry (with articles on Rimbaud, Artaud, Baudelaire, Octavio Paz) and attempted to incorporate poetry into the novel, particularly in his convoluted and complex of linear prose to capture the complexity of reality and certain extreme, quasi-mystical experiences. His novels have been enriched by borrowing the allusive and spatial possibilities of poetry.

But why should he want to go on writing poetry once he had rejected it as a form because of its essentialism, in favour of the novel's emphasis on man seen existentially, in terms of contexts and relationships? Is it a respect for poetry as something special? Respect is an important word, despite Cortázar's claim to have lost respect for poetry for his formal experiments in verse are insignificant when compared to his prose. Is poetry an outlet for his feelings that prose muffles? Whatever the answer, there is no

doubt that poetry is important for Cortázar. It could be that he wanted to be a poet but both realized his own insufficiencies and saw himself as an exponent of a dated genre, since "real" poetry is in the streets, in pop music, on walls.

In all the poems of *Pamcos y meopas*, poems about nostalgia, partly love, poems of rebellion against and disgust with time, history, the absence of meaningful patterns, consumer/bourgeois society, and poems of "privileged" anti-lyrical poetry on conventional, lyrical themes. He plays down his emotional responses, mistrusting "nobility" and "grandes palabras". The abstract, de-sensitized language reflects the poet's sense of his nostalgia for the historical Argentine forms part of a greater exclusion from a meaningful whole. His nostalgia for the historical Argentine forms part of a greater exclusion from a meaningful whole. His nostalgia for the historical Argentine forms part of a greater exclusion from a meaningful whole.

Racist imagery

CHRIS SEARLE

The Forsaken Lover

White Words and Black People.

108pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £1.50.

The forces that oppose a Black person's realization of personal identity within a white society have been extensively examined both in literature and in sociological analysis. It is to be regretted, however, that these examinations have only minimally affected the inherent racism of Western society. The most insidious, least identifiable form of white oppression, is that implicit in the English language.

It is through the English language that white norms, white ascendancy and anti-black myths are foisted upon black people. Chris Searle shows how, in the educational system of a Caribbean island such as Tobago, which is constructed to fulfil the demands of the Oxford and Cambridge GCE exam system, this fact is made explicit. There is an overwhelming pressure on a Tobagonian child to reject his dialect English (and all that it symbolizes) and to learn the correct, received English that was, or is, the identifiable attribute of the white administrator. The Tobagonian child's ability to achieve wealth and status is directly related to his ability to assimilate the language and intonation of his ex-slave-master; a language which inherently denies the validity of his experience, which brands it as second-rate.

The difficulty, Mr Searle recognizes, is that the system is propped up

by the study of (white) English literature in which is implicit the vindication of white English society. Not only is that literature often totally irrelevant to a Caribbean child's experience, but it rejects that experience through one of its central sets of symbols, the black-white, dualistic antithesis. At the heart of the problem is the question of the role that literature can, most, in fact forced, to play in black-white interaction. It is in literature that cultural beliefs and myths are enshrined. A culture is kept healthy when its literature preserves and extends its language to encompass new social realities.

Little of Mr Searle's thesis is new. He himself admits that most of it is to be found in Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks*, in the writings of V. S. Naipaul, Edward Brathwaite, Derek Walcott (to name a few), and inferentially in the linguistic and sociological research of Basil Bernstein or Erik Erikson. Mr Searle's contribution, and it is a substantial one, arises from the fact that his book is extremely interesting reading and that he refers his comments to specific examples from his own experience of the educational situation of the subject and total common sense are to be entirely commended.

In calling into question the use of (white) English literature in Tobago schools he questions the whole attitude which has denied proper recognition to Black American, Caribbean and African writers in England up to the present. If there is a weakness in the book it is that it is too small for its enormous subject.

HISTORY

Close the shutters and bolt the doors

EDWARD COBB

Reactions to the French Revolution

Oxford University Press. 54.

Edward Cobb's latest dialogue with the French Revolution is of exceptional interest, not only for what it tells us about the Revolution, but for what it reveals about history which makes him unique among contemporary historians. It is a dialogue about the nature and scope of history which he has, in a post, been inclined to brush aside. To borrow the terminology of Isaiah Berlin, most of the world's historians have been hedgehogs, with a view of their subject as a single, unified, and coherent whole. Cobb is a fox, with a view of the subject as a complex, multifaceted, and often contradictory phenomenon.

He himself admits that most of it is to be found in Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks*, in the writings of V. S. Naipaul, Edward Brathwaite, Derek Walcott (to name a few), and inferentially in the linguistic and sociological research of Basil Bernstein or Erik Erikson. Mr Searle's contribution, and it is a substantial one, arises from the fact that his book is extremely interesting reading and that he refers his comments to specific examples from his own experience of the educational situation of the subject and total common sense are to be entirely commended.

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when he characterizes Lyon and the Beane.

It is not difficult to see why Mr Cobb finds Robespierre peculiarly repulsive. The incorruptible was wholly committed to that transformation of the *homme moyen sensuel* into the selfless citizen that Mr Cobb finds so alarming. In his aversion from Robespierre *verum* he goes so far as not merely to excuse but to praise "the wise, the mere prudent citizens" who, "when confronted with the spectacle of a stabling, would turn the other way, closing the shutters and bolting the doors". Heavens, Robespierre had been suffering from a martyrdom complex since 1789, and his permanent conviction of his impending immolation on the "autel de la patrie" is bound to irritate a historian so concerned for the survival of men and things.

Considerations of this sort give a kind of unity to a book which seems at first sight to be a collection of unrelated essays about very obscure people who supported, opposed or disregarded the Revolution. Mr Cobb is now turning away from the *saucy* of his *university revolutionaries* to concentrate on those lower down the social scale who ignored the Revolution and were ignored by it, who carried on with their reassuring domestic chores, their family triumphs and disappointments, living by what he likes to call their "private calendars" while the public turmoil of the Revolution roared over their heads. Such, at least, seems to have been his intention; but there is more to it than that. His choice of some subjects and rejection of others, together with certain contradictions in his arguments, suggest that he was also influenced by other considerations of which he may not have been wholly aware.

Those who "vivaient en marge", as he puts it, were not the only people who were content to let the Revolution pass them by. Besides the people he studies, who lived below the waterline of society—the very young, the very poor, the very sick and the insane there were others who opted out or were content never to opt in. War, inflation and the Terror admittedly made this much more difficult in revolutionary France than in Jane Austen's England, but there must have been plenty of Frenchmen, especially in the quieter towns, and even more in France, who were primarily a time when the familiar hugues of death, war, and economic instability were merely harder to elude than usual. But Mr Cobb chooses to disregard all but the very wretched, with the single exception of his invariable *Reflet de la Bretagne*. This is odd if his quest is for reassuring domestic

ely, which implies a certain minimum standard of living.

When he says of his characters that "the Revolution exists as much through their narrow, unremarkable lives, or in their bloody and violent enterprises, as in the lives of the great", one may reasonably expect to be shown some sort of interaction between "ordinary" people and extraordinary events. There is plenty of promising material here, for example, in the *Gruh Street* world of the last years of the *ancien régime* which supplied so many of its virtuous to the Cordeliers' District in 1789, whose old boys in turn provided most of the leaders of both the so-called Hebertists and Dantonists a few years later. There was plenty of individualism here—and not too much *verum*. But Mr Cobb is stalling their game; the second half of his book deals exclusively with those who contributed nothing to the Revolution and were least influenced by it. This is no reason for denying them one's sympathetic attention, of course, but it seems odd to bring them into a book on the Revolution.

There is some contradiction, too, in Mr Cobb's attitude to survival. In the introduction, Barère is commended for his expertise in "a direction, which makes him a more likeable man than Robespierre because 'he has more human preparations'". But when human preparations are the opposite of "It would be as impossible to reconstruct the mentality of a Cato as that of a Carnot. Both could be terrorists when circumstances required." One of the main requirements for survival is adaptability, and the more flexible—and lucky—were able not merely to outlive the Revolution but to domesticate it and harness it to their professional ambitions and domestic comfort. One would have expected Mr Cobb, who has become a good deal more indulgent towards the thermidorians, to have enlisted all such operators under his banner.

To elude, as he does more than once, that the government of the Year II did nothing for the poor and that the efficiency of its repressive judicial system actually made life harder for them, is to oversimplify. Disregarding the decrees of Vendôme, which were presumably intended as a once-and-for-all affair, the social security legislation introduced by Barère on May 11, 1794, was conceived as a modest beginning, to be extended as soon as the return of peace made this financially possible. One has to distinguish between the consequences of wartime inflation, which probably affected the urban poor more than anyone else, the intentions of the



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Constable

Revolution in Whitehall

COLMAN SUTHERLAND (Editor)

Studies in the Growth of Nineteenth-Century Government

50pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 62s.

This collection of ten excellent essays, each with an editorial introduction, originated at a discussion, organized by the editor, in the summer of 1966, of the revolution in English government which took place in the course of the last century. The first two papers, dealt with the *Reform Bill*, Benjamin J. S. Mill: *The Home*, Foreign and Colonial departments: the Treasury, Labour, Health and Education. All the subjects are established teaching about the report, and then as a good historian should, goes back to the evidence: whence the proves that neither is correct. She concludes: that public interest in the administrative system at this time stemmed in origin from a desire to cut down government expenditure and to produce a more efficient financial and administrative

machine... rather than to increase employment prospects.

Trevelyan, equally

was concerned with what was wrong with the civil service, and how it could be remedied. He was not trying to provide outlets for the over-educated sons of the middle classes.

Indeed, in the form in which the report was submitted to Gladstone, "about seven-eighths of all appointments should still have been made under the patronage system"; and it was Gladstone's desire for a purer and more strenuous ethic in public life, as well as Trevelyan's for a more efficient service, which created the new system.

This essay typifies the book's method: accurate, unemotional surveys of previous lines of argument, and their assessment against unbiassed and relevant documents. The lished but relevant documents. The collection will be of great use to historians, sociologists, civil servants, politicians, and those who study methods of government, at every level from professional heads of department down to teenage students.

Figures in the carpet

JOHN J. WHITE:
Mythology in the Modern Novel
264pp. Princeton University Press,
London: Oxford University Press,
£4.

Myth in modern literature is hard to treat with precision and sanity. Its magical associations encourage portentousness and conceptual vagueness, its promise of deep meaning can inspire degrees of reductionism culminating in the mad argument that all literature is "really" a form of one single myth. John J. White gives a careful account of such pitfalls of assumption and terminology. He then proposes the firmer ground of a properly literary approach, using "prefiguration" to escape the ambiguous aura of the term "myth", and studying the ways in which it operates by mythological motifs as part of the conscious rhetoric of fiction.

This is welcome. Aside from the rare mythopoeist artist like Kafka, whose suggestiveness Dr White would term "archetypal", modern novelists exemplify not mythic imagination but mythological consciousness. They exploit myth calculatingly. The somewhat odd effect which results when their methods are analysed may in part be due to the critic's concentration on one isolated element in complex literary structures, for which Dr White offers his apologies. Yet it is not wholly so. In part, the user of myth is getting what he deserves, and indeed wished. It is hard to maintain that myths serve only as scaffolding in the process of composition; they are meant also to be recognized. A certain coyness is rarely absent.

This is connected with the problematic relation of myth to modern times. Its essential anachronism is

strikingly put in a passage Dr White quotes from Marx:

Is the view of nature and of social relations, which shaped the Greek imagination and Greek art possible in the age of automatic machinery, and railways, and locomotives, and electric telegraphs? Where does Virgil come in against the lightning rod; and Homer, against the radio? ...

The answer is: probably as a trademark. In art, as in means to underpin a realistic plot, to add depth or counterpoint to the merely literal, coherent meaning to fragmented secular realities. Such at any rate was Eliot's view, in a famous statement on Joyce's *Ulysses*. But the problem only begins here. Gone is the age when myths were live and familiar, allowing a treatment which could be discreet yet not obscure, clear yet not intrusive. For the modern writer, taste in these matters is on the finest of razor-edges. Arcane prefigurations will go unnoticed, obvious ones are crude; while to hide and then explain an allusion (as in John Updike's *Centaur*) is patronizing and a confession of defeat.

Given all this, Dr White is far from hard on his specimens. He is enviably tolerant even when they mix their myths, despite the analogy of mixed metaphors. He does not welcome Robert Graves's idea that there may be an "irresponsible use of myth", although the word "confusion" does irresistibly find its way into the discussion of Broch and Butor. He sets no limits on the use of prefigurative technique, proposing as his positive criterion only that the mythological novel should "enrich" our understanding of a primary realistic theme.

This surely will not quite do. If prefigurations are to add an extra

dimension, in denigrated realism (which has very obviously been the ambition of writers from Mann to Moravia) they need to be precise; compatibility between literal and prefigurative statement becomes a prime question. And how many different prefigurations can he exact? At best they will never determine, at worst blur, the realistic narrative. Even in Thomas Mann, who is the virtuoso of complexity and discreet obliquity, these risks are incurred and flaws can be observed.

Moreover, even when reality and myth have been interwoven successfully, the question remains, what has prefiguration done to literary substance? What angle has the "enrichment" added, since it can hardly be neutral. A myth will imply praise or blame for a character, inevitability for an action, the deeper causes of a result. Mann's *Doktor Faustus* lightens an artist's soul by confession, but it also "explains" a national catastrophe.

Where Dr White's study perhaps lacks a dimension is in its limitation to formal analysis. As so often, demonstrable technique does not get us far towards full critical appraisal (although bad technique may be a potent disqualifier). The causes which mythologizing served in different authors need differentiating, whereas formal analysis tends artificially to assimilate them. Dr White does at one point ask: why mythology? And some of the answers he briefly suggests are on the right lines. But the full answers will be as numerous as the writers who used myth; and they would take us deeper into cultural history and politics than his clear-headed study of prefigurative mechanics has space to go.

One man's method

WILLIAM SANSONI:
The Birth of a Story
121pp. Chatto and Windus: The Hogarth Press, £1.80.

As any publisher has good reason to know, a vast number of people imagine that writing short stories is, as those small advertisements suggest, a simple means of "spare time earning" to be acquired from a rule-book of technical hints. Not so, of course, as William Sansoni's beguilingly modest account of how he writes them makes very clear. Yet for those who have the urge but lack both practical guidance and a model, *The Birth of a Story* is a seductive—and most elegantly produced—"solitary seminar". He has taken a story written in 1961, "No Smoking on the Apron", and described, with the aid of photo-copied pages of manuscript and typescript, how he conceived, gestated, bore and nurtured it. Moreover, he finally remarks, "its life is young yet"—printed first in the *Lancet* Magazine, five years later in *Argo*, then in a Sansoni collected volume and translated for Scandinavia, its "useful little silver mine" resources have not nearly reached the scale of, for instance, "The Vertical Ladder", twenty-six times republished.

And yet, despite the luck to which Mr Sansoni attributes his successful writing career (an introduction, in early days of the Blitz, to Cyril Connolly—the very circumstances, indeed, of lonely fire-fighting stints, with death, he thought, imminent and pencil and paper a distraction to hamper—the seemingly idyllic circumstances he now describes, there is no glossing over the problems or sweat involved; three hours' concentrated writing for Mr Sansoni can voice, "is far more exhausting than eight hours lifting and carrying heavy iron pipes", not to mention the rejection slips, the need for self-disciplined privacy, the "regular devotion" without holidays and the days when only a hundred words struggle out, to be finally rejected.

Latent lyricisms

ALEXANDER F. BOYD:
Aspects of the Russian Novel
134pp. Chatto and Windus, £2.25.

A collection of short essays devoted to Eugene O'Neill, *A Hero of Our Time*, *Dead Souls*, *Fathers and Sons*, *Anna Karenina* and *Doctor Zhivago*. Alexander Boyd's book is a succession of glimpses into the multifarious world of the Russian novel. The larger issues are intimated rather than scrutinized. Without Dostoevsky and Gorky, and without *War and Peace*, the mugger's heights of the subject remain only on the fringes. Mr Boyd's is a poetic sensibility which is clearly happiest when interpreting the novels of poets—Pushkin's, Lermontov's and Pasternak's. He brings to his interpretations a graceful, eloquent style, erudition that informs without obscuring, and the appreciative eye of a critic who can see at a glance the subtle lyricism which is ever present under the realistic surface of the Russian novel.

Generally speaking, he offers little that is really new. Eugene O'Neill is neatly set in its temporal and causal context; O'Neill's significance as a "superfluous man" and writer of poetic prose—by which is meant not an arrangement of unimportant words but an unconscious arrangement of words. Truth is mysteriously inherent in his language. The three collections of short prose pieces in volume two were put together by Walter O'Brien between 1913 and 1920, but also contain work done before this time. This volume is informatively edited by Jochen Greven. Volume eleven is a collection of poems and short prose "scenes" edited from published and unpublished sources by Walter's biographer, Robert Mächler, who provides a excellent historical survey of Walter's activity in this genre.

Mr Sansoni is best in the honest if not very profound attempts to explain how, and sometimes why, a particular passage ended up as it did; how emptying a fountain pen in the wind blew ink on white trousers and became, in the story, ink on a smart and angry woman's dress, at the airport, the excuse for a seduction; why "Blust" replaced "Damon"—all explications can so easily become absurdly outdated; how certain overblown images were cherished but should have been cut.

And he is particularly good, here, on the vital job of the "chisel"—learned, it is clear, from the ruthless job of pruning advertising copy, and demonstrated a dozen times on every page of manuscript. Yet Mr Sansoni is by no means an austere writer. Perhaps his confession of early ambitions to be a great painter, poet, and composer are revealing—the images and phrases which he admits are his chief satisfaction in writing may have been disciplined by dedication to literary models (Chekhov, Montherlant, Kafka), but they are frequently painterly or strive for the compressed associations of poetry. He comments on the pleasures of the "whitened page" that short paragraphs provide—part of the "speeding-up" of fiction he sees as a consequence of film and television influence, to which writers, regrettably, must adjust. Rightly deploring the demand for the "excitant veneer" of sex and violence, he avoids "the neurotic patterns of a Western writer" and makes little sense of.

The only disappointment is, from a reader's point of view, that this particular effort—the story Mr Sansoni so lucidly and charmingly analyses—is not by any means one of his best. And fascinating as all of us may find it to share the self-criticism and retrospective illumination the annotated text offers, such treatment overloads a rather obvious tale of ultra-ecceitism, merely emphasizing a lack of subtlety, not in stylistic revision, but in the original germ.

A culture moves South

WILLIAM FITZGERALD:
The Southern Expansion of the Chinese People
200pp. Borel and Jenkins, £4.

Shi Huang, China's first emperor, is remembered for the Great Wall—adding to and consolidating a lot of existing smaller walls during the third century BC. Since their northern periphery was marked off the Chinese looked southwards. From the Yellow River to the south lay the fertile lands from which difficult agriculturalists could make a living. From the north powerful nomads challenged peaceful farmers for the soil; in the south were less organized states and richer. This is the basic psychology of Shi C. P. Fitzgerald's book.

What he goes on to explain is the manner of Chinese expansion. It is not a shallow analogy with the traditional imperial policy, now repudiating itself for further expansion. But once inside this learned, early written and absorbing book, the reader will find illumination in the ground of China's long history. We are reminded of the nature of China's evolution of city has given birth to codes and to behaviour that the patterns of a Western writer can make little sense of.

From the earliest times different groups were absorbed in the southward movement. One group, partially absorbed, was the Yueh, centred on Canton, and occupying the south-eastern coastal zone as far south as the Red River delta. This zone, fortified by the mountains who moved to join the Yueh as a separate nation, was conquered and ruled by the Chinese for a thousand years and as a consequence permanently stamped the Chinese political ideas and culture. Vietnam, the southernmost of the Chinese, Vietnam in Chinese pronunciation.

The other example Professor Fitzgerald chooses is the Nanchao kingdom which once occupied the south-westernmost province of Yunnan. In earlier times the Nanchao had emerged a loose suzerainty over tribal peoples in the region. Here and elsewhere such Chinese peoples were classified as "barbarians" or "tribes", meaning that

they had gone some way in adopting Chinese customs and above all were willing to acknowledge Chinese authority, or as *sheng*, or raw, defining peoples who lay within the range of China's interest but who had not yet been softened by Chinese cultural influences.

The Nanchao kingdom was in fact sponsored by the Tang dynasty and lasted for several centuries until it fell apart when the conquering Mongols came down through Yunnan to outflank the falling Southern Sung. Nanchao had no strong sense of identity to enable it to survive this experience, especially when so many of the people brought under Nanchao rule in their expansion into parts of Kweichow and Szechuan were, in Chinese terms, "tribes". Ever since the end of Mongol rule in China the sinicizing of Yunnan has gone on as Chinese armies and administrators have settled. Today minorities survive, but in a Chinese sea.

From the examples of Vietnam and Nanchao Professor Fitzgerald illustrates, contrasting modes of Chinese influence. Vietnam, ruled from 111 BC to AD 939, adopted Chinese ideas and political institutions which it clung to even after it had liberated itself from Chinese rule. From the fourteenth century onwards, however, the Vietnamese themselves began expanding southwards from the Red River delta, overcoming the Indochinese Cham kingdom and eroding a weakened Cambodia. The process was still going on when French power intervened.

This is a state that never attempted to invade China or contest her power itself expanded the area of Chinese cultural influence. While the Vietnamese were determined to remain independent of China they always met their obligations to the Chinese and were never treated by the Chinese as an enemy. Nanchao, by contrast, tried when it was powerful to reject Chinese suzerainty, seized nearby territory, some of which had a Chinese population, and thereby prepared the way for an eventual total absorption. More and more the people Nanchao ruled were ripe, and often Nanchao power collapsed in face of the Mongols total Chinese absorption during the Ming was the only possible result.

These were examples of landward expansion. By sea the Chinese were never so pervasive, though not because Chinese sea power, particu-

larly as it developed under the Sung, was not equal to the task. One of the most valuable things in this book is its survey of the rise and decline of Chinese sea power. That it should have reached its peak under the Southern Sung during the early years of the Ming dynasty is explained by the fact that the settlement of the region south of the Yangtze during the Tang dynasty brought the south to the height of its wealth and power in the subsequent Sung.

A detailed survey of the Ming voyages shows how formidable they were. One involved as many as 37,000 men using specially built ships, much larger than any others known in these waters. Force was on occasion used against recalcitrant rulers who were not responsive to the Chinese fleet, but the conclusion offered by Professor Fitzgerald about the purpose of these voyages, mounted not long after a new Chinese dynasty had established itself, is that

they displayed the power of China in lands where she had little more than a legend, but they did all this for the apparently empty satisfaction of winning professions of purely nominal allegiance or admission of a relative suzerainty which could not be effective.

Does this not suggest a parallel in the China of today, with its eager support for world revolutionaries in the 1960s, always provided that they acknowledge Chinese leadership and paid due respect to the thoughts and methods of Chairman Mao?

When the voyages ended China's southward expansion seemed to have ended as well. Coming from the north the succeeding Manchu dynasty was not southern-minded and was essentially land based. Only in the nineteenth century did massive Chinese emigration to what the Chinese called the Nanyang—the Southern Seas—expand the long-established Chinese settlements into large-scale Chinese communities.

From his consideration of these Chinese communities Professor Fitzgerald is led to envisage a possible renewal of Chinese southward expansion. Where the Manchus took no interest in those who stupidly chose to emigrate, a newborn Chinese nationalism has awakened their interest and loyalty. Are they assimilable? More so in tolerant Buddhist countries, it would seem, than in intolerant Muslim ones. But many objections arise to the possibilities Professor Fitzgerald suggests.

There is the broad objection that the European export of the nation state has given to the region a rigidity which it never had in the past, and also given it principles of which the present Chinese government is itself a most ardent defender.

The movement of people, of ideas, and culture, Professor Fitzgerald would object, proceeds irrespective of the intentions of governments. Might Thailand, for example, slowly become ripe—over a century or so? But the argument by assimilation goes both ways. Thai Chinese often speak no Chinese at all. Malay Chinese educated in the English language will speak to each other in that language rather than in Chinese. How many "Chinese" in these parts can read a Chinese newspaper? Is there any sense in which Singapore's government can be thought of as Chinese?

It is fair to say that in weighing up the future Professor Fitzgerald often shifts his position. At one point he suggests that the motive of the Chinese people's southward expansion "has not been cultural colonization but physical possession of the soil or commercial domination of the economy"; but his final conclusion is that it has been "both of men as settlers and also of beliefs, practices and ideas—a cultural migration". Sometimes it was independent of "government direction", at others it lacked "government support".

He is certainly right in stressing that there has never been any correlation between strong central governments and the pressure of Chinese expansion. One reason for this was that strong governments with their capital in the north were always much more preoccupied with the threat to the northern frontier and here the parallel with Chairman Mao's regime and the Chairman's fears must be obvious. The government least likely to contemplate southward expansion would be the one busily building air-raid shelters for fear of the Russians.

Perhaps Chinese movement—in every sense of that word—is really what needs to be studied, the founding of Chinese restaurants all over the British Isles as much as Chinese emigration to the Nanyang. In twenty years of growing interest in China very few books have been written that really opened a door on the Chinese experience. *The Southern Expansion of the Chinese People* is one that does.

Hogarth Press

Laurens van der Post
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L'homme before l'oeuvre

EMILE DELAVENAY:
D. H. Lawrence: The Man and His Work
The Formative Years: 1885-1919
Translated by Katherine M. Delavenay
592pp. Heinemann, £9.

The French edition of Emile Delavenay's large book, which is (we now learn) by a second volume on Lawrence's later years, was discussed at length in the TLS on December 18, 1970, in a review which was strongly critical of the effects of the author's "poetic" approach on the appreciation of Lawrence's art (the original subtitle was "L'homme et la genèse de son oeuvre"). The English version now published is, as Professor Delavenay tells us, "in the greater part direct translation, but a few chapters have been remodelled, newly available material has been incorporated and certain factual or interpretative sections have been as far as possible brought up to date."

Servant of words

ROBERT WALSER:
Das Gesamtwerk
Volume 2: *Kleine Dichtungen; Prosastücke, Kleine Prosa*.
Edited by Jochen Greven, 381pp.
Volume III: *Gedichte und Dramatische*.
Edited by Robert Mächler, 467pp.
Hamburg: Helmut Kossodo, DM. 29 each.

One of the short prose pieces in Robert Walser's *Kleine Dichtungen* describes how he wrote his first novel *Gertrude Tönnies* in Berlin in 1906. Stirling, he tells us, from a mere scribble, playing with words, utterly without serious intent, he suddenly

found that connexions were being presented to him and form realized. And all this from what he describes as "disregard for self." Walser carried this subversive over into life, even to the extent of becoming a servant to an aristocratic family in Sils, an episode fantastically remembered in *Kleine Prosa*. Walser's prose is brilliantly varied, not because of an act of will but through subversion; yielding to the object so that the prose takes the shape of the event it describes. The connexion comes from the object; language here fits experience like a cobweb, so that a white horse suddenly seen in the dark seems as meaningful as a countless observed by her foalman.

Nine of the projected twelve volumes of the *Gesamtwerk* have now been published, under the gene-

ral editorship of Jochen Greven. The complete edition should present an opportunity to give Robert Walser due recognition as an incomparable writer of poetic prose—by which is meant not an arrangement of unimportant words but an unconscious arrangement of words. Truth is mysteriously inherent in his language. The three collections of short prose pieces in volume two were put together by Walser or Biel between 1913 and 1920, but also contain work done before this time. This volume is informatively edited by Jochen Greven. Volume eleven is a collection of poems and short prose "scenes" edited from published and unpublished sources by Walser's biographer, Robert Mächler, who provides a excellent historical survey of Walser's activity in this genre.

Cheng Ho sails West

WILLIAM FITZGERALD:
The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Voyages
200pp. Borel and Jenkins, £4.

In 1405 and 1433, seven great Chinese naval expeditions sailed across maritime Asia from the China Sea to the shores of East Africa. During these voyages, Cheng Ho, a eunuch admiral, visited more than thirty countries. A series of which he left contemporary inscriptions, including a list of names in Chinese, Tamil and Malay, which was unearthed at Ceylon, in 1911. These expeditions were organized on an unprecedented scale, the main fleet on the third voyage (1409-1411) comprising forty large ships and 30,000 men. The voyages were initiated, and six were carried out, during the reign of the Yongle emperor of the Ming dynasty (1368-1424), who had captured the Dragon Throne from the Yuan.

The motives which induced him to send these costly expeditions—and the consequences which followed—have long been a subject of debate. They are still

debated by historians. J. V. G. Mills suggests that Yung-lo was motivated by a desire to enhance his own prestige by a flattering display of might, which would result in a throne of foreign vassals seeking audience at his court. He probably wished also to re-establish the renown of China as a leading political and cultural state, and to secure its hegemony over the eastern world, while expanding overseas trade by fostering "tribute missions".

Whatever his reasons, when the Yung-lo emperor died China was the strongest sea-power in Asia, or for that matter, in the world. His navy at its maximum strength included 400 war-junks stationed near Hankow, 2,700 coastguard vessels, 400 armed transports of the grain-conveying fleet, and 250 "Treasure ships", each carrying 500 men, of the type used in the expeditions to the Indian Ocean, Indonesia, and elsewhere. Representatives of sixty-seven overseas states—some of them, admittedly very small—came bearing tribute to the Dragon Throne, and the few states which refused submission were forcibly subdued. A rebellion in Ceylon and two Sumatran chiefs were captured and brought to China.

Cheng Ho (c. 1385-1440) was born of a Yunnanese Muslim family, the son of a father who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. His conduct showed that he had exceptional gifts as an envoy, a commander, and an organizer. As a technical and logis-

tical achievement, his voyages were unprecedented and unparalleled. After his death, and with the reversal of the expansion policy, the Ming navy rapidly fell to pieces, thus leaving the Middle Kingdom exposed to the ravages of Japanese pirates (Wokou) for more than a century. Since the arrival of detachments of Cheng Ho's ships at Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, at Liddah in the Red Sea, and at Malindi in East Africa coincided with the first probes of the Portuguese down the west coast of Africa and their discovery (or rediscovery) of Madeira and the Azores, it is fascinating to speculate what might have occurred if such formidable Chinese expeditions had still been visiting East Africa when Vasco da Gama made his pioneer voyage to India some sixty years later.

Ma Huan, a Chinese Muslim from Chekiang province, accompanied three of Cheng Ho's voyages as an official translator (in either Arabic or Persian), and he compiled the best of the three rather scrappy extant accounts of the expeditions, which was apparently first published in 1451. This edition, *principles* not having been traced, modern commentators have been compelled to rely on three later printed Ming editions, all of them with numerous vagaries, errors, and omissions. Ma Huan's work is not in diary or journal form, but synthesized into a brief descriptive catalogue of some twenty

"countries" (*kuo*) from Champa to Mecca. The descriptions are of uneven value, apart from the textual errors they contain; but taken as a whole they do provide us with much valuable information about conditions in the Indian Ocean region shortly before the arrival of the Portuguese.

Mr Mills has meticulously compared Ma Huan's account with those of other sources, both Chinese and European (Marco Polo, Niccolò Conelli, et al.); and he has made a close study of the works of his predecessors in this field, such as Rockhill, Pelliot, Dayenand, and Needham. The textual annotation, the technical appendices and the critical commentary are on a more lavish scale than is usual in these days of prohibitive printing costs. Even so, the Hakluyt Society had to jettison some of the editor's printed apparatus in order to avoid a price which would have put the book out of the market. But enough remains to establish this work as the best and fullest study of a very complex subject. Many of Mr Mills's identifications are unavoidable, and some words or passages in his translation may be challenged by other sinologists. But unless the original text of Ma Huan's work can be recovered, this version is likely to remain the definitive English edition. As such, it is a rich quarry for all who are interested in the history of the Indian Ocean region before the establishment of the Portuguese thalassocracy.

The politics of an arbiter of taste

ROGER FAYOLLE:

Sainte-Beuve et le XVIII^e siècle, ou Comment les révolutions arrivent
438pp. Paris: Armand Colin. 49fr.

French literature in the form of the "auteurs du programme" every Frenchman has to study—which reflects a selection approved by Académie, Sorbonne, and Ministry—is a particularly promising and largely unexplored ground for those Marxist critics who would like to show that cultural history is a bourgeois society is really a history filtered and taken over for its own purposes by that society. Such a culture was certainly established in France, before the advent of academic criticism, in the unmistakably bourgeois nineteenth century by authors such as Leconte de Lins and Sainte-Beuve, writing on the whole in journals committed to the established order. Its hold can be readily seen by the extent to which, until very recently, non-established figures such as Stendhal, Jules Verne or Cendrars received more attention outside France than within.

But the French, Henry James said, are remarkably good at "multiplying their sympathies"; . . . and remaining more or less outside their worst disasters"; and in this case they have also produced as an antidote intellectuals like the author of this book, a species inconceivable outside the French scene: an active communist of working-class origin who is established as a teacher in that bastion of elitism, the Ecole Normale Supérieure; and who has spent (with apologies to his family) a dozen vacations gathering material for a doctoral thesis acceptable to the bourgeois order, yet which will strip the pretence of universality from Sainte-Beuve and thus erode some of the judgments he established on eighteenth-century authors, as well as confidence in a great deal of nineteenth-century criticism.

Sainte-Beuve's first series of *Causes du Luthi* was published in the *Constitutionnel* from 1849 to 1852. The standard works on him those of McInerney and André Billy for instance consider them in relation to his life: until then a comparative obscure critic, a failed poet and novelist and knowledgeable member of the kind of person who gets into the Académie—he is supposed to have died, at the age of forty-five and on his return from an unsuccessful stay at Liège University, to pursue and systematize the methods he already had in mind and which later became famous. These are, broadly, to work towards a kind of natural history of great minds to be a "naturalist dans le champ des esprits"; while also studying their uniqueness and their relevance each to his own historical moment, often represented in turn by a meeting with a group of kindred minds.

At the same time, Sainte-Beuve wished to establish a new style of criticism, more independent of the week-to-week demands of the publishing scene, and less concerned with a normative aesthetic or an academic survey than with the will to retrieve, revalue, debunk freely, and thus direct the taste of the public towards greater awareness of the heritage of France—a view that, at this time, the enthusiasm of his young English admirer, Matthew Arnold. In all this Sainte-Beuve was aware of history, but only as one ingredient in an image of civilization in which kindred minds and ideologies are the red threads, and "taste" and "style" are central values. It is as arbiter of taste, a nimble mapmaker among the highways of French literature, and proponent of humane erudition in response to France's over-systematic methods, that Sainte-Beuve is remembered. Certainly, he called many of the tunes academic and critics have danced to since.

Roger Fayolle sets out here to prove that no man can be above his time and see through the pretensions of all others, as Sainte-Beuve liked to think he could. Consider again the date of the first *Luthi*, this time from the political point of view. The 1848 revolution had reached a point of balance between democratic surge and right-wing backlash. Sainte-Beuve was increasingly wary of democracy (he had been a liberal in 1830, but the political harrier had dropped a great deal since then), and his commitment to a conservative newspaper led him to omit in final drafts any sympathies he still had for the 1848, which he called "an accident de l'histoire", or "cette catastrophe immense" dont nous faisons tous partie"; he set out to retrieve from the ruins of the old society "l'esprit français" and to educate an audience to perpetrate it in answer to the grossness of the revolutionaries. Normative standards of taste, more peaceful times, make a Boileau or a Johnson; but in times of revolution, M. Fayolle argues, serene humanism is more comparable to the task of Louis Napoleon. He must also have been aware while at work on this study, 110 years later, of its similarity to the ideals of Gaullism.

M. Fayolle approaches Sainte-Beuve through the genesis of his articles: the precise reading-notes and book-lists that have been dated and preserved to the Lowenjoy collection, and which can be made to show exactly how Sainte-Beuve selected and emphasized his materials. Within the eighteenth century, the period Sainte-Beuve was particularly interested in during these four years (it includes sixty-nine out of the 148 subjects of the *Luthi*), M. Fayolle has singled out a score of authors or personalities who are typical examples of what these sources reveal. Sainte-Beuve, it now appears, conducted a systematic

"cleaning-up" operation on a century on which he had not yet written a major work, and which had returned to favour during 1848. It was in fact a persistent condemnation of disturbers of order, disguised as a campaign for good taste. Thus, in composing the well-known portraits of great writers, Sainte-Beuve chose Mme du Defand because of her hostility to "l'esprit philosophique", and used Mme d'Épinay to stress (relying on suspect sources) her and Grimm's integrity and therefore the folly of Rousseau's accusations against them. The *philosophes* themselves he attacked in a covert way, not taking on the great men themselves, but dwelling on the weakness, immorality and pretentiousness of the women who admired and lived with them: Mme de la Tour Françoise, Mlle de La Fayette and Mme du Châtelet.

The selection of men is equally biased. Barnave attracts attention because of his role as moderate intermediary between the Jacobins and Marie-Antoinette; Chénier's career is made to revolve around his attempts at political appeasement, where for 1791 one could well read 1849; and Mirabeau is brought in to echo Louis Napoleon in saying that one could not reconcile democracy with a strong executive. Farther back, Rousseau is criticized obliquely for his "provincial" style, allegedly revealed by a most unfair selection of imperfect subjunctives; while Fontenelle is accused of bad taste because he ventured to make open reference in money as a source of social wisdom: a subject taboo in the bourgeois order. Only Diderot and Buffon escape scathing criticism, because Sainte-Beuve saw in them diverse similarities to himself, but he had to gloss over their materialism. An opportunity, perhaps, for recognizing in them a "family of mind"? But M. Fayolle shows that this much-publicized "method" of Sainte-Beuve's boils

down all too often to dividing writers into two categories: the sheep and the goats, according to the amount of blame they can be made to carry for 1789 and all that. The results of this double literary inquiry, from which M. Fayolle emerges as a little less versatile, but as dogged and at least as frank as his predecessor, make fascinating reading. He avoids both Marxist and belletrist jargon; erudition, always present, is not displayed; results are presented forcefully and economically, and the author's zeal for the work of detection he is engaged on is catching. An important quality is his careful avoidance of making value-judgments of his own in response to Sainte-Beuve's merely points to the political motivation behind the link of style and taste. To isolate this, M. Fayolle has to disregard large chunks of Sainte-Beuve's thought contemporaneous with his anti-revolutionary campaign, and this thesis should by no means be accepted as the final word, not even as the final word of its kind, on the *Luthi*. One also wonders whether one man can be singled out as responsible within a whole shift in thought, as is implied here.

But on the whole this intelligent and strongly committed book is fresh air into the hitherto rather stuffy studies of nineteenth-century studies. There are others—Arnold, for instance—who might respond interestingly in similar treatment. M. Fayolle expresses the hope that criticism will put an end to its narrow concern with teaching hypothetical readers to approach established works in the name of established values, and strive instead to define how and why and by whom and according to what principles a piece of writing passes into the literary canon. An interesting study of affairs, which would mean the end of the Sainte-Beuve, but also of the Fayolles of this world, as he elegantly acknowledges in his closing sentence.

WILLIAM F. WOELRLIN:

Chernyshevskii
Oxford: Oxford University Press.

G. G. Chernyshevskii (1828-1889), a figure in the protest movement that developed in Russia after the Crimean War, was esteemed by both Marx and Lenin. This sense of the publisher's blur on the left and apt, for it takes us to the heart of the debate on the merits of a writer and thinker about whom there is an extraordinary variety of opinions. Marx told the Russian revolutionary Lopatin that he considered Chernyshevskii to be an original thinker, and since Lenin is also known to have been so enthusiastic about him, even of the novel *What Is to Be Done?*, there has developed a cult of an original and pioneering writer and philosopher, with frequent attempts to depict him as one of the great forerunners of the October Revolution. Western scholars, with one or two notable exceptions, have tended to find such claims extravagant, misleading, and even perversely inappropriate, viewing him as an unoriginal and derivative thinker, a powerful figure in the movement of Russian thought in the 1860s, but essentially a popularizer, a tired and boring writer, and a mediocre critic.

William F. Woelrlin belongs to the latter critics, but his portrait of "the man and the journalist" is so full of doubts, bringing the values out in Moscow, is admirably balanced and his conclusions are not easily refuted. The task which he has set himself is an investigation and analysis of Chernyshevskii's writings in the setting of a relatively

detailed account of his life, and he displays an impressive familiarity not only with Chernyshevskii's own voluminous writings but also with the findings of Soviet scholars, as well as an ability to pick out the strong and weak points in many an argument, be it Chernyshevskii's or that of a Soviet or Western scholar. He has no striking discoveries of his own to report but he has produced the most thorough and judicious account of Chernyshevskii's life and his journalistic activities that is available in English, and on a whole series of controversial issues his careful examination of the evidence and sober conclusions provide a welcome change from much that has passed as scholarship.

This sobriety and careful approach are especially refreshing in Professor Woelrlin's examination of Chernyshevskii's participation in the underground activity of his time and in the preparation of illegal, revolutionary propaganda, but they are no less welcome in the chapter on Chernyshevskii's philosophy, where his independence of Soviet conceptions has enabled him among other things to do justice to P. D. Turkevich's skilful criticism of Chernyshevskii's aesthetics and literary criticism, on his economic and social theories, and on his political writings entail some severe judgments but they show convincingly that he was not influenced by foreign writers and thinkers than Soviet scholars will admit. Professor Woelrlin brings out also Chernyshevskii's flexibility in political theories. He is perhaps too severe in his devastating analysis of Chernyshevskii's literary criticism and *What Is to Be Done?*, but he is surely correct in the truth that those who have claimed that he is a sensitive critic and even a major writer. This is a thoughtful piece of work and its author's scepticism a healthy corrective to a great deal of hagiography.

ROGER PETHYBRIDGE:

The Spread of the Russian Revolution
238pp. Macmillan. £4.51.

The story of what happened in a revolution is generally told in political terms—the overthrow of the existing authority, the seizure of power, the struggle to establish a new authority. This is fair enough, since these are the decisive events, the turning-points in the battle. But curiosity can be felt about what actually happens in more mundane matters of daily concern; and this incidentally may illuminate some of the deeper causes and consequences of the overthrow. The trouble is that detailed occurrences and individual experiences tend to be so scrappily and unsystematically recorded; and the general picture is blurred and unsatisfactory.

Roger Pethybridge offers in *The Spread of the Russian Revolution* six essays on by-products of the revolution of 1917. The first two, and the most solid, relate to what happened to the railways and to postal and telegraph administration. The railway situation became crucial, and is well documented, thanks to the existence of fairly strong trade union organizations, which, when the Bolsheviks seized power in November, 1917, declared itself politically neutral, not for some weeks bargained with the new government as an independent power. As the new regime consolidated itself, this situation naturally became untenable; and the Bolsheviks eventually won by appealing to the rank and file of the railwaymen against their leaders and setting up a rival organization. Before long the material collapse of the railways was

a far more serious problem than the recalcitrance of the man-power.

The postal and telegraph administration presented a somewhat different problem—a technical personnel of bourgeois complexion which was basically unsympathetic to the revolution; and this was solved mainly by the lapse of time. But Mr Pethybridge might have done a little more to emphasize how primitive the system at best was. Telephones, as he says, functioned only within cities (and only the largest cities at that), and not between them. But even the telegraph network did not stretch far into rural areas, and the services of the rural mail-carriers were sketchy and by no means ubiquitous. If the revolution spread slowly to outlying parts of the country, this was because nothing—not even news—travelled fast in rural Russia.

The third essay, on supplies, deals largely with the difficulties of the Provisional Government in the period before the Bolsheviks. Here, too, transport was the real bottleneck. The cities starved for food and fuel, and the machinery of distribution came to a halt, while the countryside had reasonable supplies of foodstuffs and abundant timber. The contributions on the press and propaganda are more open to criticism. Propaganda is a vast subject, of which the surface is no more than scratched in a brief essay. The section on the press is confined mainly to papers published in Petrograd and Moscow, and does not cover all of these. An interesting, though unsystematic, essay on relations between the capital and the provinces rounds off a useful collection. Mr Pethybridge has started quite a number of unfamiliar horses, even if he has not run all of them to ground.

Capitalism's canker

NIKOLAI BUKHARIN:
Imperialism and World Economy
173pp. Merlin Press. £2.

The most remarkable thing about this monograph is that it first appeared in a Russian journal in Switzerland as early as 1915. In Russia, after various adventures with the censor, it was published as a pamphlet after the revolution. A preface written by Lenin was lost, but was later published in New York in 1929; the present edition is a reprint of that version.

Considering the date at which it was written, and that it preceded Lenin's famous book, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, by more than a year, this is perhaps the most original of Bukharin's works. He analyses cogently and concisely the concentration and centralization of trusts, the takeover of smaller by larger units, the establishment of fewer and fewer interlocking national centres of economic control and direction—processes then in their infancy which are still with us today. He sees the political implication of these processes: the increasing domination of larger over smaller national states. Specifically, he predicted—It was already no difficult in 1915—the rise of the United States through the accumulation and expansion of American capital. "The example of the United States of America shows how the large state capitalist trust grows and becomes consolidated, how it absorbs countries and territories formerly dependent on Europe."

Bukharin did not pretend to believe that the concentration of capital to fewer and fewer hands, or its increasing control by the state, were processes pointing the way to socialism: indeed he explicitly condemned those writers, mainly Germans, who attempted to do so. Monopoly capital remained monopoly capital whether it was in private or state hands. Neither the laws of the market nor relations between classes were affected. But these pro-

cesses were in fact milestones on the road to the downfall of capitalist society. "Capitalism", he concludes, "driving the concentration of production to extraordinary heights, and having created a centralized production apparatus, has therewith prepared the ranks of its own gravediggers."

Bukharin's analysis was therefore impeccably orthodox. When Lenin's lost preface was rediscovered and published in 1927, Bukharin was at the height of his power as Stalin's lieutenant and principal theorist. But it might have been noticed that Lenin's preface dismissed rather sharply the "abstract" picture, which he attributed to Kautsky, of the "magaoates of capital" uniting to a world trust with an "internationally united finance capital". In this theory, which he dubbed "ultra-imperialism", there was not, he wrote, "a grain of Marxism". Nothing here differs in substance from Bukharin's analysis. But the emphasis was rather different, and the polemical note more strident.

When Bukharin fell from favour at the end of the 1920s these distinctions became important. He was accused of having succumbed to "ultra-imperialism", which meant that he exaggerated the degree of "stabilization" achieved by capitalism in the decade after the war, and believed that the concentration of capital was a stage on the road to the peaceful transformation of capitalism into socialism. Bukharin's distaste for Stalin's drastic policies of industrialization and of the collectivization of the peasants played into the hands of his enemies; and when at the time of its writing had been an original and rather advanced contribution to a burgeoning topic was cited as evidence of his backsliding.

A curious example of sectarian foolishness is provided by *Chia Takoye S.S.R. i knda on Myat P.*, a facsimile of the typescript of Trotsky's book *The Revolution Betrayed* with corrections in the master's own hand (253pp. Paris: IVE Internationale. Rouge. Distributed by Red Books. Paperback, £7.50).

A programme of total honesty

GEORG CHRISTOPH LICHTENBERG:

Schriften und Briefe

Volume 1: 988pp.

Volume 2: 867pp.

Edited by Wolfgang Promies.

Munich: Hanser. DM55 each.

In 1964, Wolfgang Promies asked whether we should have, to wait till the 200th anniversary of Lichtenberg's death for an edition which left out nothing. His own edition will eventually come near to meeting his demands. Besides letters and the works Lichtenberg himself published, it claims to be the first full presentation of the rough-books. On the other hand the scope of the edition has only allowed a selection from the diaries corresponding to what has been known of them before, although Dr Promies says they are "of extreme importance for getting to know the east of Lichtenberg's mind".

One cannot complain. As it is, an extra volume has had to be added, to take the commentary first intended to go into volume two. All this is typical of the Hainemann. Their "Classics" begun as essentially a popular though scholarly series, reasonably priced and unobtrusively edited, have been pushed steadily further—by cost inflation (two volumes of Lichtenberg cost what once five volumes of Schiller did) but also by the inner dynamic of the editorial projects. The apparatus now sometimes outdoes the standard editions (a.g. of Heine); and if, as in the present case, the edition fills a gap and the editor has re-checked everything from the manuscripts, it may become virtually the standard edition itself, yet through an understandable reluctance, still not go the whole historical-critical hog.

It is a pity to lack the full diaries because it is, of course, the private Lichtenberg who is fascinating. He must be the only writer whose reputation rests so completely on writings he never published: on the wide-ranging examination of human nature, his own and other people's, which he conducted to his rough-books. To his contemporaries he was an eminent professor of physics and a jobbing man of letters, his crowning achievement a commentary on Hogarth. His withdrawal bent was the only possible clue to what was going on in private; and it was in private only that he queried in one of his jottings the "common saying" that no academic is wholly confined to his published writings. Certainly no academic ever disproved the saying more conclusively.

True, there are links between the observant upstart and the academic physicist. The scientist's mind, inclined to empiricism and a constant questioning of methods and assumptions, was an important element in his mode of observing and speculating. His experience as a teacher was another: "aphoristic brevity" was a necessary weapon in putting order to the sloppy. But the aphorist also has an idiosyncratic angle of vision ("church steeples are inverted funnels for conducting prayer to heaven"), a capacity to see round more corners than most men ("doing just the opposite is another form of imitation"), and above all a full and frank humanity. Where many other aphorists operate in intellectual matters, Lichtenberg reviews the full scale of man's nature and his strangely mixed preoccupations. Where, Lo Rochefoucauld analyses the passions of the *bel étage*, Lichtenberg includes those of the backstairs. The link, and sometimes war, between mind and sensuality was one of his constant problems—in both senses. "Nursemaids watched by men kiss two children and dandle them vigor-

ously; watched by women they present them quietly." This kind of observation reveals the observer too. (Not surprisingly, Lichtenberg hit his dreams as a key to understanding men's true character.) Elsewhere he is sceptical about the current mode of sentimentality to eighteenth-century writing, and insists on physical realities as an antidote: "The peasant sits at the till in his shift and seeks there the heaven you find in her eyes. Whoever is right, there are more complicated disappointments in store for the higher approach."

This recognition of sensuality is not Rococo playfulness, though Lichtenberg could also turn a verse with point and polish. It is a serious awareness of what Montaigne called "Man's wondrous corporeal condition", and it was a prime feature of Lichtenberg's programme of total honesty. "As long as we fail to describe our life in this way, noting all our weaknesses, from those of ambition to the commonest vices, we shall not be able to love each other." From the abandonment of concealment, he hoped for a "total equality". Mao in society would cease to be "plenipotentiary who must keep secret the real state of affairs at his court".

Seen as part of such a programme, the aphorism is an instrument for peering through the defensive layers. Sharper and more sudden than the argument of experiment it compresses, it can link its object off his guard and show up discrepancies between his social and moral personality. It is not now speaking to your will, but to your conscience; "I or between his rational and irrational responses: 'I said to myself 'I can't possibly believe that', and during the saying I noticed that I had already believed it for the second time." Or even between the mere habit of observation and the purpose it was originally meant to serve: "People who are good at observing themselves and secretly

proud of it are often pleased to dissent weakly where they should be sorry"; a direct riposte, conceivably, to La Rochefoucauld's "On doit se consoler de ses fautes quand on a la force de les avouer."

As this last example shows, Lichtenberg, like all true ironists, extended his scepticism to his own approach. This was a principle borrowed from his scientific thinking. His notes on physical problems are interspersed with self-exhortations to this effect, to "doubt everything at least once, even the proposition 2x2=4". Yet to science the proposition did not lend him any major discovery. In pure, circumstances were against him. Where he did have a promising idea, there was little financial support to eighteenth-century Germany for large-scale experiments such as aristocratic moose financed to France. Lichtenberg could only send up mini-balloons while Mootzgold took to the air. But his comment on that matter blazes himself too: "Avoid indolence at all costs where Rensou reigns. Montgolfier's invention was to my hand."

Was he indolent? Surely it is disreputable in his productivity, his reputation in his day, and the range and intensity of his scientific thought achievement did not disprove indolence. He took the severe line that "it is dangerous for the perfecting of our minds to get applause for works which do not demand our full power. One marks time." Hence the added La Rochefoucauld's remark "that one can ever did, he might have." Every human soul has a portion of indolence which inclines it to do what it can do with ease. He himself might have done great things" if only in his student years he had kept to doing six hours a day of really difficult work. He had, he thought, been spoiled by too much

freedom at the same university which later impeded him by too heavy a programme of teaching, so that he spoke of being "chained to the university galley".

And as for the subtleties in his scientific jottings, they seem to indicate more questions than answers. He had the kind of mind which sees broad implications, and fits together the pieces from a whole field of endeavour, which knows the essential nature of all problems. Perhaps this is not the spendthrift mind which makes the actual advances? Something like this was his own late diagnosis: "Mistake to have planned the edifice too large."

The non-scientist may gladly enough settle for the view that Lichtenberg's genius lay in another direction than science, which gave him a method, but could not accommodate his wider curiosity. What Lichtenberg thought he had found in the novel, the least formal, most compeopod of literary genres. His note sees its potential, but simultaneously makes failure certain: "resolved to write a novel, to make use of everything". Everything! The abstractions and half-sketched situations, the social and psychological observations and wit, the satire and fantasy and philosophical profundity scattered through the rough-books—all between the covers of one novel?

Only an equal of Sterne could have done it, contriving to suggest the vastness of his subject by the complete failure to encompass it. Lichtenberg did not write his novel, but did go on with his jottings. The best we can do is to picture him as himself: the creation of some super-Sterne, presenting human peculiarity through the eyes of a humane, subtle, whimsical eighteenth-century scientist and the soft disorder of his inextinguishable notebooks.

Purged planners

SAUL JASNY:
Soviet Economists of the Twentieth Century
Oxford: Cambridge University Press.

In the 1920s were the golden age of the Soviet Union. Discussions on a variety of topics, from politics, economics, philosophy, history, and literature were quite common. Soviet journals and books from 1921 to 1928 were full of vigorous polemics between protagonists of various schools who differed on methods, goals and means of achieving the desired targets. Further, reliable statistical data were published.

Saul Jasny was a leading Russian expert on agriculture who left the Soviet Union quite soon after the Revolution and settled first in Germany and later in the United States. He wrote a number of standard books on Soviet agricultural policies. He prepared a book on Russian economists, the majority of whom had been Mensheviks before the Revolution, and a minority whom could be described as Populists, all of whom worked loyally for the Soviet government in their special fields. Today their names are among the many which have become unmentionable in the Soviet Union.

All these scholars were arrested in 1930-31, some were later shot, others perished in concentration camps or died in exile, and were made scapegoats either because they opposed the inhuman and wasteful methods of forced collectivization, or because Stalin and the Communist Party had no longer any use for Populists who could think independently.

The starting-point for this interesting study is the Menshevik trial of March, 1931, when a group of prominent planners were accused of sabotaging the Soviet economy. Jasny, while thinking that it was basically a fair trial, yet accepted that some of the accusations might have had some validity in the sense that the econo-

mists on trial had written before the first Five Year Plan pointing out the dangers of too rapid industrialization and collectivization. They forewarned that the peasants would resist vigorously, and that this opposition by the peasants would reduce agricultural production to levels below what before the First World War. The immediate results of collectivization were indeed catastrophic, exactly as they had foreseen. Stalin and the Communist Party decided in make these mild and innocuous scholars scapegoats for his "dizzy with success" policy.

Jasny examines some of the writings of early Soviet economists who are, with the exception of Kondratiev, little known in the West, such as Gromov, Buzarov, Ginzburg, Sukhanov, Rubin, Finn-Yeolotsevsky, and others. These are valuable texts, being collected from rare Soviet publications, and containing warnings made during the NEP period about the dangers of over-ambitious planning and targets not being in accord with the potential productive forces of the country.

The book is well written, but it contains a number of weaknesses: fragments of Jasny's memories of these colleagues, which are largely irrelevant; some economic texts isolated from the other writings of particular authors, such as the philosophical views of Bazarov and the theoretical views of Rubin on *Das Kapital*, which are ignored. The main defect, however, is the exclusion of people who were Bolsheviks: this omits a whole group of important economists who were liquidated during the purges, whose contributions were very significant during that early period, and who are also unmentionable in the Soviet Union today. Jasny's picture is therefore not complete.

Michael Kuser has done a good job of editing this important posthumous contribution to our understanding of the Soviet Union in its formative years.

A pivot panned

WILLIAM F. WOELRLIN:
Chernyshevskii
Oxford: Oxford University Press.

G. G. Chernyshevskii (1828-1889), a figure in the protest movement that developed in Russia after the Crimean War, was esteemed by both Marx and Lenin. This sense of the publisher's blur on the left and apt, for it takes us to the heart of the debate on the merits of a writer and thinker about whom there is an extraordinary variety of opinions. Marx told the Russian revolutionary Lopatin that he considered Chernyshevskii to be an original thinker, and since Lenin is also known to have been so enthusiastic about him, even of the novel *What Is to Be Done?*, there has developed a cult of an original and pioneering writer and philosopher, with frequent attempts to depict him as one of the great forerunners of the October Revolution. Western scholars, with one or two notable exceptions, have tended to find such claims extravagant, misleading, and even perversely inappropriate, viewing him as an unoriginal and derivative thinker, a powerful figure in the movement of Russian thought in the 1860s, but essentially a popularizer, a tired and boring writer, and a mediocre critic.

William F. Woelrlin belongs to the latter critics, but his portrait of "the man and the journalist" is so full of doubts, bringing the values out in Moscow, is admirably balanced and his conclusions are not easily refuted. The task which he has set himself is an investigation and analysis of Chernyshevskii's writings in the setting of a relatively

detailed account of his life, and he displays an impressive familiarity not only with Chernyshevskii's own voluminous writings but also with the findings of Soviet scholars, as well as an ability to pick out the strong and weak points in many an argument, be it Chernyshevskii's or that of a Soviet or Western scholar. He has no striking discoveries of his own to report but he has produced the most thorough and judicious account of Chernyshevskii's life and his journalistic activities that is available in English, and on a whole series of controversial issues his careful examination of the evidence and sober conclusions provide a welcome change from much that has passed as scholarship.

This sobriety and careful approach are especially refreshing in Professor Woelrlin's examination of Chernyshevskii's participation in the underground activity of his time and in the preparation of illegal, revolutionary propaganda, but they are no less welcome in the chapter on Chernyshevskii's philosophy, where his independence of Soviet conceptions has enabled him among other things to do justice to P. D. Turkevich's skilful criticism of Chernyshevskii's aesthetics and literary criticism, on his economic and social theories, and on his political writings entail some severe judgments but they show convincingly that he was not influenced by foreign writers and thinkers than Soviet scholars will admit. Professor Woelrlin brings out also Chernyshevskii's flexibility in political theories. He is perhaps too severe in his devastating analysis of Chernyshevskii's literary criticism and *What Is to Be Done?*, but he is surely correct in the truth that those who have claimed that he is a sensitive critic and even a major writer. This is a thoughtful piece of work and its author's scepticism a healthy corrective to a great deal of hagiography.

Branch lines

ROGER PETHYBRIDGE:

The Spread of the Russian Revolution
238pp. Macmillan. £4.51.

The story of what happened in a revolution is generally told in political terms—the overthrow of the existing authority, the seizure of power, the struggle to establish a new authority. This is fair enough, since these are the decisive events, the turning-points in the battle. But curiosity can be felt about what actually happens in more mundane matters of daily concern; and this incidentally may illuminate some of the deeper causes and consequences of the overthrow. The trouble is that detailed occurrences and individual experiences tend to be so scrappily and unsystematically recorded; and the general picture is blurred and unsatisfactory.

Roger Pethybridge offers in *The Spread of the Russian Revolution* six essays on by-products of the revolution of 1917. The first two, and the most solid, relate to what happened to the railways and to postal and telegraph administration. The railway situation became crucial, and is well documented, thanks to the existence of fairly strong trade union organizations, which, when the Bolsheviks seized power in November, 1917, declared itself politically neutral, not for some weeks bargained with the new government as an independent power. As the new regime consolidated itself, this situation naturally became untenable; and the Bolsheviks eventually won by appealing to the rank and file of the railwaymen against their leaders and setting up a rival organization. Before long the material collapse of the railways was

a far more serious problem than the recalcitrance of the man-power.

The postal and telegraph administration presented a somewhat different problem—a technical personnel of bourgeois complexion which was basically unsympathetic to the revolution; and this was solved mainly by the lapse of time. But Mr Pethybridge might have done a little more to emphasize how primitive the system at best was. Telephones, as he says, functioned only within cities (and only the largest cities at that), and not between them. But even the telegraph network did not stretch far into rural areas, and the services of the rural mail-carriers were sketchy and by no means ubiquitous. If the revolution spread slowly to outlying parts of the country, this was because nothing—not even news—travelled fast in rural Russia.

The third essay, on supplies, deals largely with the difficulties of the Provisional Government in the period before the Bolsheviks. Here, too, transport was the real bottleneck. The cities starved for food and fuel, and the machinery of distribution came to a halt, while the countryside had reasonable supplies of foodstuffs and abundant timber. The contributions on the press and propaganda are more open to criticism. Propaganda is a vast subject, of which the surface is no more than scratched in a brief essay. The section on the press is confined mainly to papers published in Petrograd and Moscow, and does not cover all of these. An interesting, though unsystematic, essay on relations between the capital and the provinces rounds off a useful collection. Mr Pethybridge has started quite a number of unfamiliar horses, even if he has not run all of them to ground.

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Viewpoint

BY ANTHONY BURGESS

YOU are writing a novel. In this novel your hero and heroine are enjoying a drink or a quarrel or an amatory session, or any two or all three of these, and a man comes to the door with a telegram. What do you do about this man? Do you write: "Alfred went to the door and found a man waiting with a telegram. He took the telegram, closed the door, and tore the message open. 'Good God,' he said. 'What is it, dear?' She called from the ballroom. 'If you do, you may, reading the passage in print, become worried about this man—so foolish, so unassuming, what an undemocratic approach to a useful and hardworking human being. But then, unable to make amends, you may reflect that the telegram-bearer has no other function in your fiction than to hear one telegram, so why waste words on him, giving him a face, a set of physical gestures, a minutely revealed treasury of idiosyncrasies? Economy is the thing. 'The maid brought in the tea' is surely enough? Calverley, apostrophizing tobacco, achieves this literary limit in impersonality when he says 'Sweet when they've cleared away/Lunch'. Why confuse the issue—which is the sweetness of tobacco—by bringing in faces, skirts, limbs, warts, even gender and number?

But some imaginative writers will not have this—Dickens, for instance, and J. B. Priestley. At the door was a man with a telegram. His face, perhaps under the influence of his presumed specialisation, was paled to essential eyebrows, like commas, were not there; the mouth was a mere pencilled O; but the eyes seemed to reflect the perturbation of a thousand past telegram-receivers.

Something like that; only, of course, better. You never meet the man again, and he has been presented as a mere grotesque conceit, but you feel that the author owes: if there were opportunity, he would tell you more about this man. Dickens, one knows, would be very ready to describe his last Tuesday's breakfast.

Of modern novelists, I prize this caring quality in Mr Priestley more than anyone. I have been re-reading his two-volume *The Image Men*, which is full of toothsome humbly cameo (sorry; that, in this context, sounds like a *Good Companion* minor character) pickled his teeth in the cinema; the film is silent, so you can hear the noise—like the kick-shoves that strewed the table at an Elizabethan banquet.

Beryl was a girl in her early twenties with not much of a nose, a loose mouth, a reddish chin, all suggesting, together with her conversation, a kind of young female village idiot; and yet, so strangely and we put together, she had

already armed with a Wellington nose. If you impose on your faceless character certain historical accounts, then you have a limitless amount to draw on, so long as the comic disclosures are small and infrequent. Thus, you give a lady a very unremarkable face with (if Beryl) the eyes of Napoleon Bonaparte. She will then be able to look on your hero, her lodger, like a holly cooked helping of chicken Marengo, or like Barris disclosed as a royalist, or with the patience appropriate to a long-winded report from stuttering Berthier, or as on a wet afternoon on St Helena. I think, on the whole, that creating a character, especially a minor picturesque one, is a matter of arbitrary manufacture: there's rarely any question of the novelist painting what he sees before him and trying to get the details right.

And, to go further, I think that descriptions in works of fiction are, so to speak, parallel to the real substance: they're a decorative way of saying: "These things and statements and events really exist; they take up positions in space-time, and to prove it I'll hang draperies on them—see how the contours press through that piece of jazz-patterned calico." But if there are no descriptions, this rarely seems to invalidate the reality, so eager is the reader to believe. Pretty women merely need to be pretty (the colour of eyes and hair is an acceptable gratuity but no more). He was a handsome greying man in a smart suit, about forty-five—that will do even for a minor character. How many people can describe Emma Bovary? In *Ulysses*, does Stephen Dedalus wear spectacles? Food and drink are, since they touch nerves more sensitive than the optic ones, more important than the pattern of wallpaper or the hero's best suit, and it is generally agreed that only second-rate novelists write passages like: "He went into a pub and got stinking drunk," or: "After a hearty breakfast we resumed our journey." Paradoxically Dickens can get away with this kind of ellipsis occasionally, since we know exactly what he means by a hearty breakfast.

In my last published novel, aware that it was necessary to describe the lobby of a small hotel but having no real idea what that lobby looked like, I took a page of Wilkinson's Malay-English dictionary one of the great works of lexicography, incidentally and filled the space with objects described on it. I began the descriptive passage with a girl out the telephone asking for a number which was the number of that page and, to provide a further key for anyone interested, specifying the subscriber—Mr R. J. Wilkinson. I have, on Creative Writing courses in America, stressed this elusory value of the dictionary to the fagged student faced with a chunk of reit-magic. Page 929 of the *American Heritage Dictionary* gives you, among other items, *ortolan*, *Orvieta*, *Orwell*, *oscillogram*, *osculum* and *Oris*. You can surely draw the furnishings of a living-room with these (cushions with the texture

of an ortolan's wings, one's buttress making an oscillatory snacking noise as it disengages from a plastic chair, a new pot of Oris face cream while for good measure, *Down and Out in Paris and London* playing at the osculatorium down the street. It seems to be dialogue—exterior and interior, when it becomes more logical—that counts in a novel. A novel is perhaps only a tired-out play, the characterization achieved through the temporal flow of speech, while empty-stomached space has any kind of scrap thrown at it—say, a luggage tag with KIN on it (false port code for Kingston, Jamaica), or a prospectus of a kindergarten, or a liqueur called Kintlepoint, a stuffed goose, a sleeping King Charles spaniel, a torn kimono.

"Schöder nicht sein," spat out Hamlet to the dump corridor outside the palace library. He looked again, priming himself. No help there. "In, das ist die Frage," he muttered in the mind to suffer. A loud hop into the shadows, uttering out his note. The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune? Or, in take arms, against a sea of troubles. Not one who you could take arms. The whole blew in keenly from the open window, a dank wind from a black sea. Troubles what troubles? Oh, toothache, the sudden migraine in the night, the melting mouths and stern eyes of the seekers, the mess of endless lawsuits, the girl whose wagging bottom was both a torment and a dismissal. You could, he thought, turn Hamlet into a ten-foot, dried-page novel, no sea of troubles that look.

Having made Mr Priestley's *The Image Men* a starting-point, it would be only decent to return to it and say what pleasure it has given me on a couple of heady days in rainy Rome, far from London pubs, steak and kidney pie, Cheddar cheese and wrapped bread (not to mention BBC-2 and the sound of London English). When we talk of the novel's being a solace we rarely, if we are honest, think of the novels that we are reading. *Ulysses*—Alain Robbe-Grillet's *Jepoy* and Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Invitation to a Beheading*—these are the novels that we read for a solace. For leave that to the novelist's laboratory; but we do demand a clear-cut plot either. We want the easy flow of picturesque meals in inns, people getting into bed with each other (not too explicitly described, since we all have a fair idea what it's like, cabbage that seems to have been prepared by a deep-sea diver, a woman coming to the door who looks as if she has spent the night in the dustbin, a man who turns into a fly, there's some sort of favour on the blueboard, he said. My small son recently, seeing me at knotted up at the typewriter, asked me why—his Italian blood coming out—I didn't write for fun. He's right, of course—a river of dialogue, always easy, and doing what pleases you in between (a man knocked together out of old bones, a woman made of chiffon and jewels, like Mr Priestley, enjoying it. Until one gets sick of enjoying it. Then, enjoying the cold douche and the self-flagellations, back to "inter-

candid history

"I got all the balls in except for General de Gaulle. Now poor Heath has put all the balls in except Mr Wilson. It's hard to get all the balls into the right holes at the same time. Thus Harold Macmillan reminisced to Robert McKenzie only a day or two ago.

We can't claim to be much more successful. But two homies we do have: de Gaulle, himself, his political philosophy and the movement he inspired, perfectly held to Anthony Hartley's *Gaullism*, £3.25 (described by D. W. Brogan as a model of clarity, accuracy and judicious reflection. No one who wants to make an effort to understand the de Gaulle phenomenon can afford to neglect this candid study). And to come in September Edward Heath and his confidants in Andrew Roth's *Heath and the Heathmen*, £2.25, paper £1, a revealing personal-political biography-analysis which will light forest fires in the realms of Heathland.

ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL
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Hardy and the ideal loved one

EVELYN HARDY and F. B. PINION (Eds.): *Thomas Hardy's Letters to Florence Henniker 1893-1922*. 221pp. Macmillan. £4.

PERRY MEISEL (Ed.): *Thomas Hardy: The Return of the Repressed*. 175pp. Yale University Press. £2.95.

MURRY WILKINSON (Ed.): *Thomas Hardy and Rural England*. 224pp. Macmillan. £3.95.

of the background to *Jude the Obscure*, his next and last major novel. The death of Hardy's father, which neither public nor critics were ready for anything but the most conventional treatment: that of sexual immorality, irresolute with the editors of his previous serialized works, such as *Jude the Obscure*, had taught him a sort of naive cynicism: he deliberately missed the original contractors for the serial of *Jude* about the nature of the story, and his affected surprise at attacks on the completed novel—"if this sort of thing continues, no more novel-writing for me"—was penned at the very moment he was actively collecting material for an even more drastic onslaught on the public's sexual feelings, *Jude the Obscure*.

It seems more than probable that the bitter and obsessive expressions in *Jude* about conventional marriage, often dragged in as a form of moment of the novel, were a form of unconscious challenge to his own wife, herself a typical member of the novel-reading public. Hardy's she took them as being so, Hardy's mad and it may be accounted that—was, however, deeper and more general. He seems to have seen

himself as a latter-day King Lear, telling mad truth about the shams of sex and religion ("superstition's hideous control"), particularly when the two appeared together. On April 21, 1893, he sketched a two-act tragedy about abortion, entitled *Birthright*. In the next month he first met Florence Henniker.

For Hardy, she was everything that had always attracted him in a woman. She was a lady moving in society, vivacious, apparently of advanced years (she went to Isen's plays and was considered "fast" by the older members of her set), unconventional, and herself an author with a third novel just being published. These, and her charming, intuitive nature, were the qualities with which he had invested his own wife over twenty years before. Emma Hardy had turned out to be excessively middle-class, conventional to a degree, her vivacity largely a naive desire to shock her provincial neighbours, and her literary pretensions a total embarrassment. Here, he must have felt, was the real thing at last.

Hardy may also have been predisposed by his own fable, *The Well-Beloved*, serialized in the previous year, with its "theory of the transmigration of the ideal loved one, who only exists in the lover, from material woman to material woman". Indeed, if he had reflected, this was an exact statement of the case, for Florence Henniker, like Emma Hardy, was not quite what she seemed to him. Her free manners and unconventional views were a matter of the upper-class aristocracy which English aristocracy maintained direct from Regency

times even in the midst of the middle-class respectability of Victorian England; her own father was a notable collector of pornography. Basically, she was a woman of her time, a believer in the sanctity of marriage, particularly to her own military husband, and the teaching of the Church. This, after a first flurry of letters, and some unfulfilled comments of temptation, poignantly described in his poems, was what Hardy found her to be.

Yet though his letters seem to have become less "effective"—his own term—on this revelation, they continued to record how much she meant to him, both as a man and as an artist. They make clear for the first time how right the second Mrs Hardy was when she said that the character of *Jude* in *Jude the Obscure* was partly drawn from Mrs Henniker. The appearance and background detail of *Jude* had been sketched by Hardy, between 1890 and 1893, from memories of his dead cousin Tryphena Sparks; but it is Pinion shows most convincingly in his preface how much Sue's mental, intellectual and spiritual attitudes owe to those of Florence Henniker, even down to small details such as "Hardy's rather surreptitious inclusion of 'Florence's' among Sue's Christian names." The Shelleyan idealism, which she revived and shared with him, the sense of free comradeship and intellectual equality, even including literary collaboration, made her, as Sue was to Jude, Hardy's "dear little friend". The dark background of his marriage, still more of his wife's fanatical opposition to *Jude* itself, intensified his feeling that Florence Henniker was the "one rare, fair woman". If, like Sue with Jude, she found it better to conceal from herself the intensity of his feelings, she nevertheless saw him through his crisis of the 1890s, of which *Jude*, for all its manifest flaws, is the triumphant outcome. Many of the letters demonstrate also how much these flaws were part and parcel of his own outlook at this time.

Even allowing for the fact that many of the most "offensive" letters were destroyed, this collection is notable, like the novel, for its unswerving in thought and expression. Inspired comments on Shelley, "whom I should like to meet in the Elysian fields", are almost swamped by self-congratulations at his being childishly rude to other society ladies, and the semi-ludicrous commonplaces of his domestic life with Emma, the Carrie to Hardy's Mr Potter; indeed, the episodes of her poor bicycle seem to come straight out of *The Diary of a Nobody*. In all this, the joint editors, with their full and informative notes, have kept an admirable balance, neither claiming too much nor missing a single significant detail. It is a valuable record of a great writer at the height of his tormented powers.

Perry Meisel also sees in *Jude the Obscure* an attempt to resolve the almost unbearable tensions of the writer.

His imagination has driven him to the boundaries of his limitations in the writing of prose while, at the same time, it has rescued this last precarious vision by calling on the creative resources he did possess.

For Mr Meisel, however, the tension is present to Hardy's work almost from his beginnings as an author. Arguing that Hardy early believed the Darwinian concept of adaptation, by natural selection, of each individual for the benefit of the community, he sees Hardy's first novels as portraits of a settled community, attacked from without by individuals alien to its ways, and inflicting wounds upon it. Begloring with the comparatively innocent Parson Maybold, who does away with the Church musician in *Under the Greenwood Tree*, these villains—the architect Knight, Sergeant Troy, Wildeve and Bontade, Farfrae the Scotsman, Mrs Chynoweth and the doctor, Elphinstone, become increasingly sinister. A typical example is Troy turning the traditional harvest feast into a drunken debauch. Though the community takes its toll of these non-adapted aliens, they in their turn

Reactions to the French Revolution

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Nationalism before economics

T. M. CULLEN:
An Economic History of Ireland since 1600
208pp. Batsford, £2.

BARBARA LEWIS SLOW:
The Land Question and the Irish Economy 1870-1903
247pp. Harvard University Press, London: Oxford University Press, £4.

Although the past thirty years have seen a revolution in the writing of Irish history, its makers have, for obvious reasons, concerned themselves mainly with politics, and especially with the complex relationship between Britain and Ireland. The merit of this preoccupation has been to bring contentious matters to the pitch where they can now be discussed uncontentiously. Its defect, however, has been that other kinds of history—especially economic and social history—have been sadly neglected.

Of late there have been signs that this situation was beginning to change. One of those who have taken a prominent part in this recent, pioneering *Life in Ireland*, but also a valuable summing-up of what has so far been achieved in the modern sector of this field, is *An Economic History of Ireland since 1600* by Dr T. M. Cullen. This is a formidable revisionist, and even in the space of two hundred pages he exercises this particular talent to great effect. It would, however, have been kinder to the non-specialist reader if he had indicated a little more clearly where the Cullen doctrine conflicts with earlier orthodoxies, or perhaps one should now say where the Cullen orthodoxy replaces earlier orthodoxies. But collectors of new interpretations will note with interest his dismissal of the idea that "a state of suppressed land war" existed in the eighteenth century, his writing down of the Great Famine as a watershed in modern Irish history, and his closely argued contention that Ireland in the second half of the nineteenth century had both a more complex and a more prosperous economy (the dire 1880s apart) than has previously been supposed. Altogether, this is a stimulating and indispensable book, marred only by a too superficial

treatment of the past fifty years and by the fact—in no way Dr Cullen's fault, but still unhappily a fact—that panoramic surveys of this kind are always bound to be bows drawn more or less at a venture in the absence of the detailed monographs upon which they ought properly to be based.

Monographs on all aspects of the economy are badly needed, but it is quite remarkable that Irish historians—looked as they are in that obsession of theirs with political developments—should have shown such massive indifference to the economic aspects of the crucial land question. Nearly all the most fruitful work in this field has been, and is being, done by American scholars. One of these, Barbara Slow, has now produced (as one of the "Harvard Economics Studies") a short, critical investigation of the land question and its bearings upon the Irish economy. Although, like other researchers in this jungle, she is driven to rely mainly upon familiar printed sources rather than upon the wealth of estate papers which, in a more ideal world, would long before now have been made available to scholars, she has written a book which supersedes all its predecessors and deserves itself to become a minor classic.

The Land Question and the Irish Economy 1870-1903 is lucid, humorous, elegantly argued and goes to the very heart of the relationship between landlord and tenant. This, like Dr Cullen's, is a highly concentrated piece of work and, even more than his, it is essentially a demolition job. Many hoary myths go by the board: that Irish landlords were rack-renters, that evictions were on a vast scale, that state intervention achieved its ends, that the Land Act

of 1881 was revolutionary, or that land purchase was the decisive factor in the way that contemporaries thought it was—all these pass under Mrs Slow's cool and calculating gaze and none of them will be the same again.

The recurring motif of her book, and in this too it resembles Dr Cullen's, is that broad generalizations about "the Irish economy" are nearly always misleading and that the only safe guide is to assume that significant regional differences will generally make nonsense of governmental policies aimed at the country as a whole. Thus, not only does she establish that for much of the post-Famine period evictions were relatively few and rents remarkably low, but she demonstrates also that in some parts of the country—notably the west and south-west—overpopulation of uneconomic land was so chronic that even if the rent had been reduced to zero the cultivators of what passed for the soil would have found it almost impossible to make a living.

She identifies this, rather than the tenure-system, as the root evil; though the tenure-system did operate to worsen the situation because it made it simply not worth the landlord's while to improve either the quality of agriculture or the land itself, an investment of capital and energy which alone might have staved off the catastrophic collapse caused by the bad seasons and the falling prices of the late 1870s. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that for Mrs Slow the landlords were as much the victims of the British government as their tenants were the victims of the Irish weather.

The conventional views of the relationship of economic development to the mainstream of Irish political and con-

stitutional history in the nineteenth century need to be revised. Another economic exploitation of the Irish land by the English landlord cannot play a starring role.

This is not to say that there was no connexion between the land and the nation. On the contrary, Mrs Slow does establish a close connexion, though essentially a negative one, deriving not from the success of carrying out of a settled policy but from the attempted application of drastic remedies to a disease for which those remedies had never been designed.

To the eventual triumph of separate land legislation made several contributions: it did not ameliorate economic conditions, and at a critical time it emptied the field of economic policy and in the course of this, its working out, exacerbated landlord-tenant relations, focusing on a point of conflict of interests; finally, the greatest contribution of land legislation was that it eventually resulted in the end of landlordism in Ireland. Once the garrison was gone the island became much less important to the English.

It was hardly surprising that the patient, the landlord class, should not have survived the treatment. But Mrs Slow chooses to end her thesis with a question which opens up wider horizons. "If", she asks, "the Irish sacrificed economic progress on the altar of Irish nationalism, who can say it was the wrong choice?" Reading this at the very moment when the Irish—in the Republic at least—have voted five to one in favour of entry into Europe, one is moved to ask a supplementary question: Who can say that the economic sacrifice of the nineteenth century is any longer relevant to the twentieth?

Hitler's plan for Norway

ALAN S. MILWARD:
The Fascist Economy in Norway
317pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, £5.

This book is a welcome addition to the literature on Norway and the Second World War, and the first one to study its wartime economy in depth. It is also the most revealing account so far of the economic war aims of Hitler's Germany, and offers convincing proof that the concept of the New Order for a fascist Europe was much more than an empty phrase covering traditional short-term exploitation of occupied territories.

Norway's particular interest to Alan S. Milward's study of the New Order is that here, in contrast, for example, to France—the subject of his preceding book—the German rulers felt called upon to seek a fuller realization of their long-term plans for re-making of Europe in their own image. Not only was Norway "racially suitable" for such an experiment, but the traditionally open and internationally-minded Norwegian economy would in any case have to be reorientated to suit the realities of Hitler's Europe. Also the insignificance of the Norwegian Nazi party meant that there was no need for the Germans to share their power with indigenous authorities.

Professor Milward's external approach to the history of the Norwegian wartime economy has considerable advantages. It enables him to concentrate on the German and the New Order context without being sidetracked into the interesting but comparatively unimportant squabbles between the German rulers and their Norwegian stooges. If, as a result, the reader is treated to some rather strange explanations of how inferior Norway was somehow predisposed for fascism but nevertheless avoided it, this matters less since it plays no part in Professor Milward's central theme.

After introductory—and rather less satisfactory—chapters on the

Norwegian setting, Professor Milward lays the basis for his main theme with a succinct survey of the far-reaching schemes to make Norway a suitable partner in the New Order of the *Grossraumwirtschaft* which was to follow Germany's victory in the war. He makes no exaggerated claims about strict coherence of those plans, which were worked out amid the internal rivalries and conflicting priorities of different parts of the Nazi hierarchy and subjected to the occasional interventions of the Führer himself. But the main elements emerge clearly: a strong emphasis on basic economic activities such as farming and fishing—for both social and economic reasons; a further development of natural Norwegian contributions to the European economy—cheap hydro-electric power and certain mineral resources; and more extravagant foibles like road and rail communications to link the whole of Norway more closely to the heart of the *Grossraum*.

Professor Milward's thesis has two parts. First, he wants to show that the New Order in Norway was not just a temporary expedient determined by the needs of the German war effort, but aimed at a more or less permanent restructuring of the Norwegian economy. This is done very convincingly, by demonstrating the long-term nature of the plans even at the cost of immediate profits. Thus his secondary argument, that German economic policy in Norway makes no sense without its long-term character, seems not only unnecessary but also somewhat dubious. The marginal economic value to Germany of the occupation of Norway hardly proves the existence of long-term economic motives any more than the negative strategic results of the occupation invalidate the primarily strategic motives for the German invasion. Quite apart from this, Professor Milward's assertions about the unprofitability of Germany's occupation of Norway—based on Norway's import surplus during most of the war, seem to take

insufficient account both of the Wehrmacht's large share of those imports and the inflated prices of German exports in Norway.

The second part of Professor Milward's thesis, attempting to show the plans of the New Order as being ideological or "socio-psychological" as well as economic, is more problematic. Although the language of New Order planning may often have had heavy ideological overtones, it is difficult to escape the feeling that this could also serve as a mythological smoke-screen for economic or strategic necessity. In particular, the self-sufficiency principle of so many aspects of the New Order both in the Norwegian and in the wider European *Grossraum* concept, while apt to quarantine German-dominated Europe against "infection from the more materialist systems", would also protect it against the free-trade liberalism and economic power of, in particular, the United States. In this respect, therefore, the fascist New Order did not differ in kind from traditional closed-shop imperialism. Yet Professor Milward does have a case for his emphasis on the ideological elements of the New Order, even if it has to be limited to an observation that, in the fascist New Order, ideological and economic-imperialist motives were inextricably intertwined throughout.

In the end, of course, the ideological element mattered very little. Even the ambitious schemes for a New Order in Norway soon wilted, as the *Blitzkrieg* faded into a long-drawn struggle of staying-power and resources and the short-term needs of the German war economy had to be given overall priority. In Professor Milward's own words, from then on the

yardstick to be applied to economic policy in Norway became the extent to which such policy could help Germany's survival. Grand conceptions faded and the details of daily output of a certain limited range of goods became more important.

The revenue men

EDWARD CARSON:
The Ancient and Rightful Customs
336pp. Faber and Faber, £4.

Edward Carson is the librarian and archivist of the Customs and Excise Department and so is particularly well qualified to write its history. His volume contains four valuable appendices dealing with the departmental records, the location and dates of surviving ship's registers, legislation concerning wrecks, and material on the customs and excise libraries, supplemented by a useful glossary and bibliography.

There, however, ends much of the book's direct importance for historians, for the text is very largely a chatty collection of interesting stories and facts about the development of the Customs service, without benefit of detailed references and without any serious discussion of the economic and social implications of the growth and enforcement of Customs duties. The treatment is chronological and gets fuller as it goes along, the chapters on the Middle Ages and early modern period being distinctly thin and sketchy.

This is not to say, though, that the book does not have attractions for historians as well as for general readers. Among the lighter notes is the intriguing suggestion that America may have been named not for Amerigo Vesputci but for a much more obscure individual, a Customs collector at Bristol, personally known to John Cabot. Richard A. Merryke. And popping up among the more eminent members of the eighteenth-century service one is to be found such un-Customs-like figures as Adam Smith, Robert Burns and Thomas Paine.

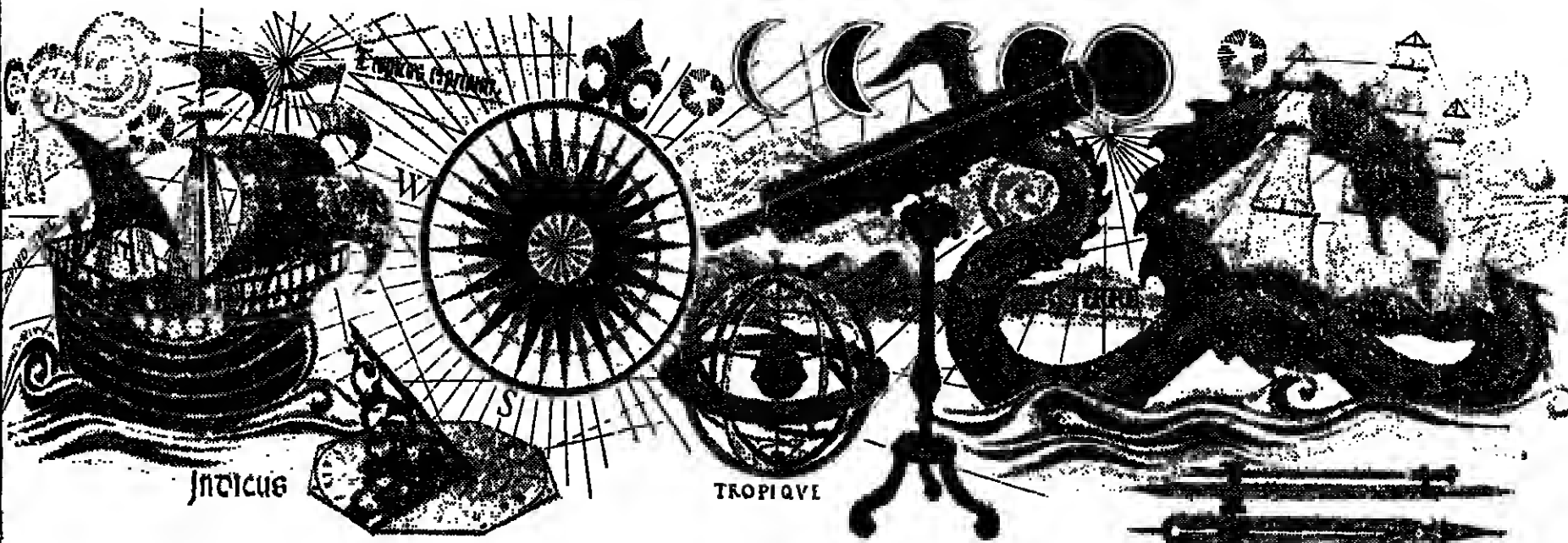
The eighteenth century, of course, was the great age of smuggling; a trade frequently conducted on an enormous scale and in a far from fortive manner. Indeed Customs officers often thought better of tackling smuggling gangs of twenty, thirty, or even forty armed men, while the smugglers' wives, waiting on shore, were not above pushing an inquisitive

riding officer over the cliffs. Revenue officers were not infrequently assaulted and sometimes killed or captured by the organized gangs, and the English and Welsh coasts were notorious for the pillaging of wrecks by "country people" in whose activities it was highly dangerous to interfere.

In the nineteenth century large-scale smuggling became less open and less violent as the prevalence of forces improved in size and efficiency. There was more emphasis on concealment of contraband in ordinary commercial cargoes, and with the growth of foreign travel, private smuggling became more common. The Board of Customs drew attention to "some gentlemen's mistresses, and more ladies' maids" who were prepared to take risks "for the revenue", sometimes by "padding out their dresses with the latest of ladies' dresses".

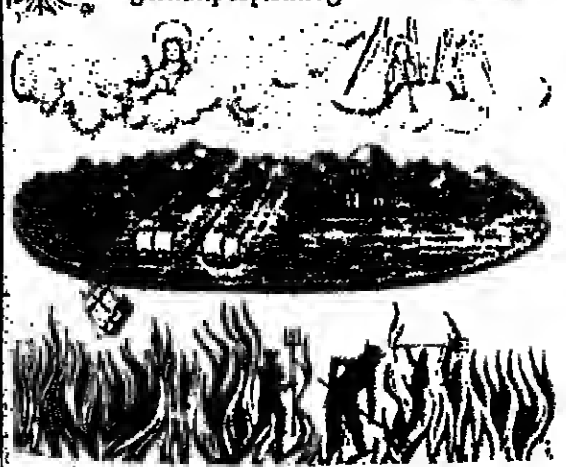
Although the advent of free trade simplified Customs work there was considerable accretion of extra duties. In addition to its old duties of quarantine and customs regulations, custody of wrecks, the collection of light dues, the department became responsible for registration, dealing with alien agents in a wide variety of matters for the Admiralty and Board of Trade. The diversity of functions increased still further after amalgamation with the Excise in 1911, particularly as the Excise took responsibility for administering the pension scheme until 1947. In the present century too, of course, the return to protection has also multiplied the Customs' revenue functions.

There is a great deal of detail in all these developments, and it seems unfortunate that the book has not chosen to deal more systematically with its various subjects. One would like to think that it is a rigidly chronological approach, rather than mere human perversity, that makes the chapters on smuggling the most interesting in this far from uninteresting book.



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